THE Nation

AMERICA'S LEADING LIBERAL WEEKLY SINCE 1865

VOLUME 152 NEW YORK · SATURDAY · MAY 10, 1941 NUMBER 19

IN THIS ISSUE

THE SHAPE OF THINGS 541

EDITORIALS

Control of the Air 544

The Lag in Defense 545

If Lindbergh Is Right *by Freda Kirchwey* 546

ARTICLES

Ghost Towns and Defense *by Jonathan Daniels* 547

Mr. Knudsen's State of Mind *by I. F. Stone* 550

Our Lost Time *by Fritz Sternberg* 552

Underground in France *by Louis Dolivet* 554

The Odds on Maverick *by Charles Curtis Munz* 557

In the Wind 558

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

Rats, Lice, and History *A Poem by R. P. Blackmur* 559

Louis Fischer's Autobiography *by Lewis Gannett* 559

Divided We Are Falling *by Lindsay Rogers* 561

A Lively Sermon *by Jacques Barzun* 561

Nationless Men *by Ralph Bates* 562

The Case of Harold Rugg *by Burges Johnson* 563

Films: Snow White and the 1,200 Dwarfs *by Anthony Bower* 565

Music *by B. H. Haggin* 566

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS 567

Editor and Publisher
FREDA KIRCHWEY

Managing Editor ROBERT BENDINER
Washington Editor I. F. STONE
MARGARET MARSHALL *Literary Editor*

Associate Editors
KEITH HUTCHISON MAXWELL S. STEWART

Dramatic Critic
JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Business Manager and Director of Circulation
HUGO VAN ARX

Advertising Manager
MARY HOWARD ELLISON

Published weekly and copyright, 1941, in the U. S. A. by The Nation, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Washington Bureau: 856 National Press Building, Washington, D. C. Entered as second-class matter, December 13, 1879, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

The Shape of Things

LATE REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE IRAQ situation is becoming increasingly serious. The government of Rashid Ali Al-Gailani, which achieved power in a coup d'état a month ago, appears to control most of the country except the region around Basra, Iraq's only seaport. The British government insists it is within its treaty rights in sending troops to the country to protect its communications, and it will no doubt attempt to re-establish its grip on Bagdad and place in power a more amenable government. However, the clash comes at a time when it can ill afford to spare troops and equipment for the fairly extensive operations which may prove necessary to accomplish this end. Axis funds and encouragement are clearly behind Rashid Ali and his group of military and political supporters, and the Nazis are doing all they can to spur a general Arab revolt. However, this may not prove so easy despite unrest in Syria and Palestine. Ibn Saud, the most powerful Arab ruler, has given no sign that he is willing to support such a movement, while the Emir Abdullah of Transjordania will almost certainly remain faithful to his British alliance. Nor are the Indian Moslems likely to give any countenance to such attempts to cash in on present British difficulties. The great danger is that the Nazis might be able to send planes and air-borne troops to Iraq in sufficient numbers to provide a real stiffening for the Iraq army. That would be a difficult undertaking so long as the armistice conditions in regard to French-held Syria are observed, but this is a question on which Vichy may be persuaded to adopt an accommodating attitude. Altogether Britain is faced with an exceedingly awkward problem. It has been far too ready to take the fidelity of Iraq for granted and far too casual about combating activities of Axis agents.

*

THE PRESIDENT'S ORDER TO THE MARITIME Commission to assemble 2,000,000 tons of shipping to aid Britain in the Battle of the Atlantic raises hope that the shipping problem is at last being tackled with the energy it demands. Of course the Maritime Commission cannot create ships, but it can divert vessels used in coastwise or Great Lakes service to overseas service and, if neces-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sary, transfer them to foreign registry. The Lake shipping available is unfortunately limited to ships that can travel through the present St. Lawrence canals. In the case of coastwise vessels the only problem is that of organizing rail traffic to care for the extra burden. The sixty-nine Danish, Italian, and German ships recently seized in our ports will be available as soon as Congress responds to the President's request for enabling legislation. The general practicability of the President's plan for a shipping pool to aid Britain is shown by the speed with which the Maritime Commission obtained the release of twenty-five tankers for British use, with promise of twenty-five more within a brief period. Although there has been no confirmation so far of the reported arrival of American ships at Suez, American supplies are known to be getting through to Egypt. This is, at least, a good start in the most crucial phase of defense and aid to Britain.

✶

THE MAIN MILITARY LESSON TAUGHT BY THE Balkan débâcle is that local air superiority is absolutely essential for victory in any land campaign. Overwhelming German strength in the air shattered Yugoslavia's communications on the first day and prevented its armies from rallying at any point. Every account of the British retreat through Greece tells the same story. The *Panzer* divisions might have been stalled in the mountains, but incessant attacks from the air both on the troops themselves and on their bases and supply lines crippled the defense. Under the circumstances the extrication of a large part of the British expeditionary force was something of a miracle, as well as a demonstration of the continued effectiveness of sea power. This achievement merely tempers an undisguised defeat. Nevertheless, the outcome of the war in Greece does give reason for optimism, for it suggests that once Britain is enabled to turn the tables on Hitler in the air, it can turn them on land also.

✶

THIS WEEK WASHINGTON WILL WELCOME the new Argentine Foreign Minister, Señor Ruiz Guinazau, who is on his way home from a visit in Spain. We may be sure politeness will mark his reception; the government knows how to honor distinguished official guests from the southern Americas. But it is to be hoped that ceremony will not overflow into exuberance. Señor Guinazau is a fascist. He is also an open admirer of the Axis. His stay in Spain was a series of tributes to the glories of the present dictatorship and the heroism of the Phalanx. If this attitude went unnoticed in the United States it echoed loudly in the press of Latin America. *El Pais* of Montevideo commented critically on the fact that "at the moment when Nazis and Fascists are directing their efforts toward Spain in order to involve it in the war, the Foreign Minister of a South American republic" should publicly pay the highest tribute to those elements in Spain which most vigorously support the Axis. The paper referred particularly to a speech of Señor Guinazau in which he praised Serrano Suñer, expressing admiration "for his political concepts and his clear vision." The press of Madrid, on the other hand, was unreserved in its praise of Señor Guinazau and of the Argentine as the "great Hispanic American nation, pride of the *Hispanidad,* which resists all kinds of foreign influence [a clear reference to inter-American cooperation] and demonstrates in itself the splendid work of the new Spain in the world [an equally clear reference to the fifth-column activities of the Phalanx in Latin America]." We should not be misled by this exchange of fascist felicitations; the majority of the Argentine people are pro-British and anti-Hitler. But in view of his recent activities in Spain, we think the visit of the Foreign Minister should be celebrated with becoming restraint.

✶

HITLER'S ACCOUNT OF THE WAR TO DATE, delivered before the Reichstag last week, proves that the Nazis have introduced a new order in words if not in deeds. It was as perfect a study in reverse meanings as we have had from the inventor of the concept of "provocative defense." Hitler's portrait of Winston Churchill as an incendiary, a fanatic, a warmonger, a criminal, and a drunkard might be entitled Adolf Through the Looking Glass, with the reservation that Hitler drinks nothing weaker than power. "For over five years," said the Führer, "this man has been chasing around Europe like a madman in search of something that he could set on fire. Unfortunately, he again and again finds hirelings who open the gates of their country to this international incendiary." As for Hitler's story of how he waged peace on the Balkans and of his efforts to thwart the "bribed conspirators" who caused Yugoslavia to resist an arrangement which offered that nation the "greatest future conceivable," it must have brought tears of envy to the eyes of Goebbels. His speech seemed to be designed primarily for foreign consumption: he promised 100 bombs for every one the British drop in the war on civilians, for which Churchill is, of course, responsible; he denied threatening the United States and boasted that Germany could never be beaten. He made one promise, however, to the German people—another year of war and better guns with which to defend Utopia in reverse.

✶

THE SUPREME COURT, IN PASSING ON THE case of Arthur W. Mitchell, Negro Congressman from Illinois, who was forced to move from a Pullman car into a Jim Crow coach as he neared the Arkansas border in 1937, performed the neat legerdemain of approving segregation by attacking discrimination against Negroes

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the matter of accommodations provided. Justice Hughes, who delivered the decision, insisted that the issue was "not a question of segregation but one of equality of treatment." "Colored persons," he said, "who buy first-class tickets must be furnished with accommodations equal in comforts and conveniences to those afforded to first-class white passengers." The court thus gives indirect aid and comfort to those Southerners who rationalize their racial prejudice by asserting that the Jim Crow statutes "were enacted for the purpose of promoting the welfare, comfort, peace, and safety of the people of both races"—we quote the words of a group of Southern attorneys general who petitioned the court not to rule on Mitchell's appeal. In spite of the fact that the court in effect sanctioned segregation, Mr. Mitchell himself hailed the ruling as the first decisive step toward equal rights for Negroes "in my lifetime." The jubilation of Mr. Mitchell seems to us misplaced, though the practical effect of the decision may be to break down, if only a little, the existing structure of discrimination. The maintenance of equal Pullman accommodations for Negroes would mean a constant financial loss for the railroads, since so few Southern Negroes have the means to travel that way; and it is therefore quite possible that Mr. Mitchell may now ride in Pullmans undisturbed. If the railroads are required to provide equal accommodations in day coaches, where most people must travel, race discrimination may bow to economic considerations. But that is a long way round to the enforcement of the Fourteenth Amendment, and the Supreme Court has not helped matters by evading the issue.

*

FIRST-QUARTER EARNINGS PRESENT A MOST eloquent answer to the cries of anguish in financial circles over the "ruinous" increase in taxes, wages, and other costs of production. Figures from 176 companies show total profits for the quarter of $269,500,000 as against $218,000,000 in the corresponding quarter of 1940. This represents a gain of more than 23 per cent over last year's profitable operations. The largest of the industrial companies, the United States Steel Corporation, had a profit of $36,559,995, which was its largest since 1929 and more than double the figure for the same period last year. Bethlehem, General Motors, and some of the other large corporations did less well, but in each instance the profits were impressive as compared with pre-war earnings. These reports, it is true, do not take account of the new taxes to be levied this year or the recent wage increases that have been granted. But it should be noted that several of the larger corporations, including United States Steel, have set aside a general reserve to meet mounting taxes which is not included in the profit figures. Company officials estimated that the United States Steel wage increase will cost the corporation some $62,000,000 a year. This is $13,000,000 less than the corporation's "profit from operations" in the last quarter alone, before deductions. Despite Wall Street hysteria, business does not seem to be suffering from the defense emergency.

*

THE SALE OF DEFENSE BONDS HAS STARTED impressively without any of the objectionable features that characterized the Liberty Loan drives of 1917-18. There have been plenty of publicity stunts, radio programs, and other advertising devices, but no quotas have been set and no direct pressure has been brought on any individual to force him to buy a bond. The emphasis has been on general participation by the public rather than on the amount of bonds sold. Sales of the "baby bonds" are limited to $5,000 per person during a calendar year. Although the total volume of sales in these amounts can hardly make much of a dent in our national-defense costs, the Treasury is on sound ground in emphasizing sales to small holders rather than to wealthy individuals or to banks. It should help to hold down luxury expenditures and provide a much-needed cushion against post-defense deflation. And the restriction on sales to the wealthy should minimize the financial advantage that this group might otherwise obtain because of the urgent need for funds. As much as possible of the national-defense program should be financed by increased taxation, but since some borrowing is necessary the Treasury is to be commended for putting it on a thoroughly democratic basis.

*

JAN VALTIN, THE MAN WHO CAME OUT OF the night, seems to us entitled to stay out. As we go to press, his case is about to come up once more before the Ellis Island immigration officials, who will in turn pass their findings along to Washington for a decision. There is, in fact, no chance that the government will order Valtin back to Germany, where the authorship of his book would alone assure him a rendezvous with the headsman's block. But there are other unpleasant eventualities that may befall a man whom the government officially finds undesirable. He might be jailed until such time as the government could execute a deportation order without endangering his life. Even if he is permitted temporarily to remain at liberty, the threat of deportation, forever hanging over him, would leave him neither peace nor any possibility of planning for the future. Technically Valtin has no case. He was a member of a "subversive" group, and he reentered this country illegally after having been deported on the basis of a felony conviction. He makes no denial of these charges and appeals to the tradition of political asylum. We believe his position is sound. All his offenses stemmed directly from his membership in the Communist Party, and it is crystal clear that he no longer has any connection with this or any other "sub-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

versive" organization. He has, in fact, done a valuable service in exposing the methods of such groups, and it would be compounding cruelty with folly to penalize him again for political views that have already subjected him to the medieval tortures of Hitler's Germany.

*

AT FIRST BLUSH IT MIGHT SEEM THAT WHAT this country needs least of all is a new committee. We have had committees to save democracy abroad, to promote democracy at home, to suppress democracy both at home and abroad. But until now there has been no promising national organization pledged to fight for freedom on both sides of the ocean. The Union for Democratic Action has been formed for just this purpose, and the enthusiasm with which its emergence has been greeted is a fair proof of the need. There can no longer be any question about the will of the majority of Americans to give England every aid, even at the risk of involving this country in the war. At the same time millions of Americans are fearful that our participation in the fight to check fascism in Europe will encourage reaction in the United States. In part this fear is well founded—the Dieses, the Coxes, the Hoffmans want nothing more than a chance to beat labor into submission in the name of patriotism; in part it is the carefully nurtured bogy of those who would frighten us with fascism here the more easily to establish it elsewhere. England, under the watchful eye of the British Labor Party, is fighting fascism abroad without succumbing to tyranny at home. We believe that the Roosevelt Administration similarly would fight a two-front war for democracy, but it cannot do so without organized mass support. The Union for Democratic Action is designed to strengthen its hand in just this way.

Control of the Air

THE heart of the majority report of the Federal Communications Commission on chain broadcasting lies in the statement, "The United States has rejected government ownership of broadcasting stations, believing that the power inherent in control over broadcasting is too great and too dangerous to the maintenance of free institutions to permit its exercise by one body, even though elected by or responsible to the whole people. But in avoiding the concentration of power over radio broadcasting in the hands of government, we must not fall into an even more dangerous pitfall: the concentration of that power in self-perpetuating management groups." The report shows that this is the very situation in which we find ourselves.

Stations affiliated with either NBC or CBS represent over 85 per cent of the total night-time power of unlimited-time radio stations in this country. In 1938 the 310 smaller stations not affiliated with any one of the four national networks had a consolidated net loss of $149,000, while the 350 stations belonging to one or another of the networks earned more than $19,000,000. Nearly half this income went to NBC, CBS, and the twenty-three large stations which they own or operate. NBC controls two of the national networks, the Red and the Blue. CBS has the other large network. The fourth, Mutual, is not only small but finds its possibilities of growth blocked by the long-term exclusive contracts which bind most of the important stations to NBC or CBS. The profits of NBC and CBS are enormous. In 1938, according to the findings of the Federal Communications Commission, NBC earned 80 per cent on its investment in tangible property, CBS 71 per cent. NBC earned more than $22,000,000 from 1926, when it was formed, until 1938, when its investment in tangible property amounted to $4,284,000. CBS earned $22,500,000 during the twelve years of its existence before 1928, in which year its tangible property was a shade less than $5,000,000. By investment in tangible property the commission means actual investment in property as distinct from such intangible items as good-will,

NBC, as a subsidiary of the Radio Corporation of America, is itself part of a vast combine which plays a dominating part in entertainment and communications. "RCA's control of thousands of patents, and its experience with and ownership of pre-broadcasting wireless transmitters, as well as its support from General Electric and Westinghouse, gave it a running start in the infant radio-broadcasting industry," the report says. Through its acquisition of the Victor Talking Machine Company, RCA became the leading phonograph and phonograph-record manufacturer. Through its own management bureau in NBC it controls many leading artists, "bargaining" with itself for their services. It occupies a powerful position in international radio communications and in the manufacture of all kinds of radio equipment. It has "a tremendous competitive advantage," the commission finds, "in occupying such newly opened fields as frequency-modulation (FM) broadcasting and television —an advantage which may, indeed, discourage newcomers in fields where RCA seeks to become dominant." Its subsidiary, the National Broadcasting Company, has among its affiliates one-fourth of the broadcasting companies of the country, using nearly half of the total night-time power. RCA itself has nearly 250,000 stockholders, none with as much as one-half of one per cent of the stock. Thus a self-perpetuating management runs this vast enterprise in manufacturing, entertainment, and communications, embracing films as well as the radio. And any attempt to curb its control over the ideas fed to the people of this country is deplored as an attempt to "destroy the American system of network broadcasting."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Many strange and undemocratic phenomena have been paraded before us in recent years as part of the "American system," but none more dangerous than this one. The spectacle is not made the more palatable by the fact that these great companies took over the nation's air waves without payment and pay no tax for their use other than the normal income and property taxes imposed on other enterprises.

The commission has promulgated a series of regulations designed to enable it to use its licensing power to put an end to these monopolistic practices. Radio-station licenses must be renewed yearly, and this is the rod which the commission holds in reserve to enforce its new rules. These rules are designed to end long-term exclusive contracts, to restore competition in the sale of programs to stations, and to prevent the great chains from controlling all the outlets in areas where no independent stations now exist. No doubt NBC and CBS will fight these rules in the courts. But it is clearly in the public interest that they be upheld and enforced. Control of news and opinion and entertainment over the air by two great chains is just as bad as a similar control of the nation's newspapers would be.

The Lag in Defense

DEFENSE output is still lagging behind defense needs, and a great acceleration in tempo is required if production is to match the various appropriations made by Congress. An even greater effort will be essential, as the charts illustrating Fritz Sternberg's article on page 552 show, before the flow of arms for the democracies equals the production of the Nazis.

In the past week the President has moved to enlarge one industrial bottleneck—the manufacture and utilization of machine tools. His letter to Messrs. Knudsen and Hillman, directors of the Office of Production Management, points to "the urgent necessity of expanding and speeding up the manufacture of critical machine tools." Admittedly, output in this field has grown impressively during the past year, but, as the President says, "it is not enough." He urges, therefore, that machines should be put to work twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, subject only to the necessary time out for repairs. There are, he suggests, reservoirs of both skilled operators and machines outside the defense industries which await mobilization.

The facts revealed by I. F. Stone in last week's *Nation* and again on page 550 of this issue show that there is good reason for dissatisfaction with the present rate of defense production. The machine-tool industry itself is a long way from a twenty-four-hour schedule. The usual explanation by the employers is labor shortage, but Mr. Stone shows that there are still plenty of unemployed machinists. The industry suffers from a high labor turnover, which indicates poor working conditions and lends weight to his suggestion that one obstacle to an improved rate of operations is the disinclination of machine-tool manufacturers to recruit union-conscious workers.

We need not only more machine tools; we also need to see that existing ones are not kept idle or used for relatively unimportant purposes. A very large fraction of the nation's tool capacity is to be found in the automobile industry, which has received enormous contracts for armaments. But these contracts are mainly to be filled in new plants equipped with new machine tools. Meanwhile the automobile companies have been enjoying not merely business as usual but business better than usual, working almost to capacity on the manufacture of private cars. Only now have we an agreement for freezing design, applying not to 1942 but to 1943 models, and a restriction of output to the extent of a 20 per cent cut in this year's banner production.

We agree with Mr. Stone that Mr. Knudsen has been carried out of his depth in attempting to do the job assigned to him. No one denies that he is a production genius, but organizing the production of even so huge a corporation as General Motors is a very different thing from organizing the productive facilities of the nation as a whole. That calls for a very wide range of qualities: for a firm grasp of national economics, for imaginative insight into the actions and reactions of many industries, for a sympathetic understanding of labor problems. But above all it requires the ability and character to sweep the mind clear of preconceived notions.

Judged on such necessarily severe terms not only Mr. Knudsen but many of the other dollar-a-year men brought in to run the defense program have proved unequal to the ordeal. It is much to ask of a business executive, assigned the management of a section of OPM dealing with his own industry, to think nationally all the time and not to be influenced by some consideration—perhaps unconscious—of the welfare of his own industry and his own plant. Most business men have been thinking for years in terms of limited production, of achieving the most profitable balance between supply and demand. It is not easy for them to adjust themselves mentally to the idea of output stretched to the uttermost. Again and again able corporation executives working in Washington have failed to visualize the magnitude of the program on which they are engaged. The steel men protested against independent surveys calling for a great expansion in steel capacity; now they have to admit that the estimates of Gano Dunn, which they approved, are inadequate. It has been the same story with railroad cars and with aluminum and other vital materials. All too often the blinders of private interest have impeded the vision essential to the planning of any undertaking as vast as the defense program.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If Lindbergh Is Right

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

IF CHARLES A. LINDBERGH is right and Hitler is indeed invincible, if the powers resisting Nazi aggression even backed by the full industrial and fighting strength of the United States are doomed to defeat, then the American future may as well be written off. For Lindbergh's happy faith that a victorious Germany will prove no threat to the United States is too silly to consider as an alternative. Indeed, the Japanese have gone out of their way to demolish it by publishing "peace terms" which show exactly what role the United States is cast for in the Axis order of tomorrow. It is possible, of course, that Mr. Lindbergh has reconciled himself to the modest niche allotted his country in the new cosmology of fascism. But it is more likely that he chooses to discount the terms published by the *Japan Times Advertiser* as merely the imaginative notions of an irresponsible editor. Unfortunately this is not true. The *Times Advertiser* is an organ of the Japanese Foreign Office, and it obviously reflects the views which the Foreign Minister, Mr. Matsuoko, brought home from his recent tour of Europe. And if there is any doubt in Mr. Lindbergh's mind concerning Mr. Matsuoko's attitude toward the Axis and the United States he might recall that three days before the terms were published the Foreign Minister, at a Tokyo mass-meeting in his honor, proclaimed his absolute confidence in an Axis victory and his conviction that Germany and Italy were working closely together "for the great common ideal of creating a millennium." So the proposed peace terms must be viewed as an official exposition of the sort of future the United States, as well as Britain, may expect if Lindbergh is right about Nazi invincibility.

According to those terms, the strongest powers, acting in conformity with "the law of nature," will have the greatest opportunities to develop the world and to determine spheres of influence, resources, and "type of government." The British Empire would be one of the powers permitted to "settle world peace," and so would the United States. But both Britain and the empire, in advance of the settlement, seem to have been conclusively disposed of. For South Africa and India would be made "independent," British possessions in the Pacific would "obtain increasing self-government" within the generous boundaries of Japan's "co-prosperity sphere," Africa would go to the Axis, and the United Kingdom, while remaining "the heart of the British Empire," would witness "a gradual transfer of authority to Canada," which would fall under the hegemony of the United States. Australia would be allowed to remain "within the British Empire" but would open its doors to Japanese settlement, and the naval bases of the empire, west and east, would be demilitarized. So much for old England.

The United States is not left out; we get our share of the swag whether we want it or not. Not only Canada. Our sphere of influence would include Central and South America, Newfoundland and Greenland, "with islands and regional waters." Perhaps Mr. Lindbergh only read that far. If so his complacence is easy to understand; those provisions might have been cribbed from one of his speeches. But there is a catch, whether he saw it or not. Let's read on: ". . . but the United States would undertake not to form hegemony over South America inimical to the Axis and would accord the fullest freedom and equality of opportunity to Germany and her allies in that continental brotherhood. No American naval bases would be west of Hawaii, and that stronghold would be reduced in importance." And after the Axis had attained parity with the United States and Britain, we would declare a naval holiday. That seems to mean that we would grant Hitler full hunting rights in Latin America—political as well as economic—having in advance divested ourselves of the military and naval strength to resist actual threats to the hemisphere. The earth, in short, and all that dwells therein would belong to Germany and Japan; they would be its masters, and other nations would lead an independent existence only by sufferance and within the limits laid down by the Axis. Our own effective limits would be the boundaries of North America, an area we would presumably share with Britain.

So with a few strokes the Japanese paint out Mr. Lindbergh's pretty picture of his country's future in a Nazi-controlled world. But did he ever really believe in his own creation? The fact is, Lindbergh tacitly recognizes the absurdity of his own hope of peace by insisting that the United States must build up an impregnable defense, in the air, on land, on the sea. Against whom? Against powers which have no designs upon us? No, quite evidently against powers which may want to attack us but will be afraid to do so after we are fully armed. Is that the idea? Perhaps, but if it is it leaks as badly as idea number one. For if the United States, in its present state of preparedness, plus the British Empire with its unconquered fleet, its fighting armies, and its vast resources, cannot defeat Hitler, surely it is difficult to believe that a year from now, or two, or five, the United States alone, however well equipped, will be able to defeat Hitler then in full control of the Continent and Africa and the resources of the British Empire—and in active alliance with Japan. If Lindbergh is right and Hitler is now invincible, our remaining hope lies in a future of civil war and revolution fought against desperate odds in every land around the globe.

But happily only a few Americans believe Lindbergh is right. A majority of the people and their elected officials and most political and military commentators

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

believe, first, that a Nazi victory would create a monstrous threat to the security and independence of the United States and, second, that it can probably be prevented by the united and growing strength of the British Empire and the United States. The outcome is not sure in any case. Time works for Hitler. Hesitation and delay in this country can bring Britain to defeat, and it is a fact that our nation is not yet geared to Hitler's tempo. But we are moving faster every day. And we are determined to support Britain with whatever weapons prove most effective, with goods and ships—and with arms if need be. We reject, as dangerous nonsense, the alternatives offered by Mr. Lindbergh. And we reject our assigned role in Mr. Matsuoko's new order.

Ghost Towns and Defense

BY JONATHAN DANIELS

THE house suited the young mechanic fine. He was one of the lucky ones of the defense workers. He had hardly been born when the Emergency Fleet Corporation built the house late in 1918; destroyers were being as swiftly built in Bath then as they are now. The house and all the other houses like it cost too much, Congressmen said later. After the war nobody wanted them. The shipyards rusted and died. Maine boys coming home from school amused themselves throwing stones through the windows of the empty houses. Then a Maine man, paying pennies for the dollars they had cost, bought them from the government, and the Yankees round about thought he was cheated even so. He spent his time after that complaining about the schoolboys and his taxes. Now his houses are filled with shipbuilders like the young mechanic I visited. Other shipbuilders lacked houses—and not only in Maine, and not only shipbuilders. Defense workers slept on pool tables in Vallejo, in drafty, jerry-built resort cabins near Quincy, in tin huts and tarpaper shacks almost everywhere.

But in this arming there has been realization from the beginning that housing may be the measure of morale. And as long ago as last July a man was brought to Washington to make sense in shelter in the defense effort. He and the job are still there. The house of housing is at 1700 I Street. It is not one of the vast classic buildings which shelter the hordes busy with reform, recovery, and defense. It is one of the pleasanter old, red-brick mansions of Washington. I think it belonged to a Congressman of another day who would be amazed by the dimensions of the housing contemplated within it now. You walk up three oak flights to the office of Charles Forrest Palmer, Coordinator of Defense Housing. The room, just as it looks now with its blue leather furniture, its green baize table, its decorations of American flag and golden eagle, its dark-blue walls and cream-white ceiling, used to be in Atlanta, Georgia, where Mr. Palmer was both successful real-estate operator and builder of the first slum-clearance project in the United States financed with federal funds.

A few years ago, when most realtors in the Atlanta region were expressing themselves with regard to public housing entirely in terms of the profane and obscene, Mr. Palmer went with his Ford and movie camera to see what Europe and England were doing about public housing. He was impressed and brought back his films to impress others. In his office his blond secretary closed the Venetian blinds; an office associate set up the projection machine. We sat in the blue leather chairs and watched his pictures: the President looking at public housing in Georgia; old English couples in public-housing projects which nobody ever thought would be knocked down by bombs; housing in Mexico and also close at hand in the dark alleys of Washington. After the movies Mr. Palmer's secretary brought us mid-morning Coca-Colas after the fashion of the Georgians.

In the light I looked at him. He is a blond man of forty-nine, well-dressed, a pipe-smoker. He was born in Illinois, went to Dartmouth long enough to join the Dekes there, sold real estate in San Diego, Santa Barbara, and Chicago, rode to the last war as a cavalry lieutenant, settled in Atlanta, and made money in office buildings. He seemed the proper product of the whole migration.

He began to be interested in slum clearance as an approach to business property, but his interest helped rid Atlanta, he says, of 25 per cent of its slums. He still believes that good housing is good business. And he thinks that in defense housing everybody should be happy on the job, the private builder and the public planner. There is plenty of room for all, and glory and profit for all, in the drive to put a roof over the head of the sergeant's wife and the steamfitter's children, to house the masses of men pulled from miles around to the places where the needs of modern defense have clotted the population.

Unfortunately everybody has not been happy. Mr. Palmer, however, looks serene still, even though it has sometimes seemed that he was made Coordinator of Defense Housing to be cussed at. He may deserve his

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

share of the cussing. I think he does. But he seems to thrive on the alternating charges that too much housing construction is being allotted to private enterprise, and that the real-estate market is being ruined by public construction of homes for defense workers. Neither of these charges seems serious to me. The one important thing is to get the workers off pool tables and out of the back seats of jalopies and into beds. And in a hurry.

Mr. Palmer says that is being done. Private-residence building during a recent seven months' period, he said, was up 29 per cent over the same period last year in the whole country and up 150 to 200 per cent in some defense centers. At the same time the federal government has under construction, or in the final stages of land buying or contract negotiations, 75,000 dwelling units in 259 projects in 136 localities. That sounds excellent. I wish it seemed to me, after examination, as excellent as it sounds.

THE FEAR OF GHOST TOWNS

We Americans may not have prepared for war, but we had prepared for housing—presumably. At least there were in Washington, when the President delivered his defense message on May 16, 1940, the day the Germans advanced past Sedan on the way south, eleven different federal agencies concerned with housing in the United States. There had been more thinking about housing by experts on the public pay roll during the eight years before the President spoke than in the whole history of the country before the United States went to war in 1917.

Perhaps I expect too much in the way of quick results from a staff mobilized in peace before even the threat of war. I recognize that planning for cheap housing to last over a long debt-paying period is a very different task from planning for housing to be erected quickly to meet the needs of suddenly congregated men. There is no doubt about the need. I have seen it in twenty towns or more. But the fact is that on the anniversary of the day the Germans tried to drop a bomb on King Haakon of Norway (and darn near did it) the official tabulation of the Coordinator's office showed that for defense workers in essential private industry the government had provided only 1,691 dwelling units.

Funds, that April day, had been allocated for 23,980 more; 12,823 were under construction. In addition, around government posts and plants quarters had been provided for enlisted men and civilian employees of the army and navy to the extent of 5,070 living places. In process are ten times as many places for such low-income army and navy employees. But in process is not in being. To me as a newspaperman it seemed poor newspapering when *Defense,* the official weekly bulletin of the Office for Emergency Management, which alone stands between Mr. Palmer and the President, ran the headline "New Defense Housing Units Total 2,580 in One Week" over a story which actually said only that contracts to produce that number had been let in one week.

I think—and the figures show—that the situation is improving. Soon contracts let last fall will begin to mean completions, which are the only thing that means anything to homeless men. Also, Washington is beginning to learn from the ingenuity of the shelterless. Months ago the defense towns were crowded with trailers, and now trailers are being provided in new crowded towns by the Farm Security Administration. The officials have learned something about demountable housing, too, from seeing that a hen house on a farm today can be a cabin by a rising camp tomorrow.

A large part of the new private housing of which Mr. Palmer spoke—and a good deal of that is public housing so far as the source of capital for its construction is concerned—is built for sale, not for rent—though efforts are being made to encourage private housing for rent. What workmen need in the crowded defense towns is not a house to own but a chance to be a renter. In spite of all talk about high wages in defense industries, what they want and need is decent and livable housing for between $20 and $30 a month. That, "believe it or not," Mr. Palmer says, is all they can afford to pay in the towns and cities where they have swelled the population.

"We have no intention," he said, "of creating ghost towns or ghost sections by our defense construction." Other realtors, chambers of commerce, bankers rejoice in that declaration. The important thing, however, is that no houses in such possible future ghost towns be unloaded on defense workers; workers must not be required to buy in order to have a place to sleep. Mr. Palmer may have no intention of creating any ghost towns. He has the duty of seeing that housing is provided in towns where the hope of continuance of present industrial or naval or military activity will be slight if any peace like the old peace ever returns. In such cities manufacturers have refused to expand their plants without some government assurances about depreciation. Workmen in the same places certainly should not be left with houses which may become quite as obsolete in terms of proximity to future jobs. Defense housing should not be a doubtful speculation in home-ownership by the defense workmen themselves. That would certainly mean unloading the ghost towns on men out of jobs in them and unable to move away.

Mr. Palmer does not like rent-control legislation. It proved impracticable, he says, in this country during the last war and is giving Canada trouble today. Obviously, however, when so large a part of the defense of a whole country and the money that goes with it are concentrated in a hundred-odd towns, the law of supply and demand in housing may cease to be economically just and become both ravenous and ridiculous. Ghost towns are no more to be feared than grab towns.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HOUSING NEEDED. NOT NOW BUT YESTERDAY

One thing indicated by this fear of future ghost towns is that in spite of Mr. Palmer's title of coordinator there has been slow growth in real coordination. Not until late in March did the National Defense Advisory Commission seem to see that the selection of defense centers was a part of planning for shelter. Before that sometimes both the army and navy seemed to act as if they wanted to see how hard they could make the housing problem. Little towns were overwhelmed by their decisions, and the capacities of bigger towns were stretched to amazing proportions. Chester Davis, before he left the National Defense Commission, made public protest against a concentration of contracts which seemed to him a dangerous neglect of the country's human and other resources. But if defense work is started, as it often must be, in places where few workers live, its wages are bound to bring in the people. Housing for them comes afterward.

Possibly the pressures could not have been avoided. But at a time when the country has been aware of defense strikes and the President himself has spoken sharply about jurisdictional disputes, some of the most serious jurisdictional disputes have taken place in Washington itself and in his own government. Some people there refer to housing as the classic example. The Coordinator builds no houses. His very title—one which is becoming increasingly popular in Washington—expresses his duty to bring together diversity, to harmonize the various existing housing agencies. But that means harmonizing not only housing but housers, ambitions, people. Few agencies in government are ever abolished. When their conflicts get entirely out of hand they are coordinated. And from within, the process of being coordinated looks like a fight for life.

There have been no picket lines deployed by one housing agency against another. But almost everybody in Washington interested in housing is aware of the terrific struggle—involving the United States Housing Authority, the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, the Defense Homes Corporation of the RFC, the Public Buildings Administration, the Farm Security Administration, the Navy Department, the Federal Housing Administration, and the Defense Commission—over who should build what housing. Palmer came into that situation and, some say, participated in the struggle for the power and the glory. Some say John M. Carmody, the Federal Works Administrator, was in the fight up to his armpits. Admirals were angry, and coordinators and administrators were jealous. There has been attempted sabotage of personalities if not of housing. And none of it has done housing any good.

The quarreling has not been limited to the officials. In some strange way housing has seemed the almost perfect vehicle for carrying old quarrels into the new crisis. A good many realtors still do not like public housing, and a good many public-housing advocates do not like a fairly common type of realtor. Outside the housing field itself the quarrel spread. The fight over public housing in Quincy, Massachusetts, for instance, where the contending parties were led by the C. I. O.'s Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers, saying housing was needed, and the Chamber of Commerce, saying it was not, was not simply a quarrel between the house owners and the house needers. It was connected with a new contest for strategic advantage in this automotive age.

The number of automobiles in America has multiplied more than ten times since industrial expansion began with Allied orders before the first World War. This has relieved the pressure in towns. It means that men can go a long way from Bethlehem Steel's Fore River shipyards to sleep. And that suits Bethlehem Steel splendidly since it disperses them not only far from the gates of the yard but also far from the little house near the yard gates where the C. I. O. has its organizers. Once employers wanted their villages for domination; now unions find organizing easier when workers' houses are congregated close to big plants. Both sides discuss housing as housing and not as an item in the strategy of industrial conflict, but they seek to turn it to their purposes all the same.

Mr. Palmer says: "Our only prejudice is in favor of whatever will give us enough adequate housing in the quickest time." That is, I think, a proper prejudice for a man in his job. But he keeps on talking, in all his speeches—and certainly not he alone—about the future after this unpleasantness. About what Holland did after the last war (where are those houses now?). About plans for a better-housed, better land here. About people under an "enlightened capitalism," snug against all storms. About communities planned against community blight. About realtors grown wise and good, landlords we can love, builders who will bless us. After reading him, I am never sure whether Mr. Palmer is a realtor or a reformer, or a little of both. But I think as a realist with only one prejudice he has got to shake equal hell out of realtors and reformers if he wants to get on with this immediate job before he comes to that next and perhaps pleasanter one.

Men are still sleeping in shacks beside important jobs. They need houses quickly, houses they can rent—not buy—and rent at levels low enough to prevent the siphoning off of war wages in war profiteering. That is essential to any productive push in war industry. It is essential now to America. We shall not make a lovelier, sweeter land unless we can protect the one we have. I take Mr. Palmer at his word in defense housing: "More housing is needed. Not now, but yesterday."

Afterward we can begin to plan about tomorrow.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. Knudsen's State of Mind

BY I. F. STONE

Washington, May 1

MR. KNUDSEN symbolizes business as usual, and he has placed men like himself in the key subordinate positions of defense. This is true in machine tools. The National Industrial Conference Board's *Economic Review* for April 24 reports that the defense plant-expansion program already calls for the construction of more than 1,300 new plants to cost $2,750,000,000. All these plants have to be equipped with new machinery, and the machinery must be made with machine tools. This program looks toward the supply of a 2,000,000-man army, and, huge as that seems, plans for a 4,000,000-man army are already being discussed in Administration circles. German industry is geared to provide arms for an 8,000,000-man army. These figures give one some idea of the tremendous expansion in prospect for our comparatively small machine-tool industry.

Machine tools, as Secretary Knox said the other day, are the "critical item" in the expansion of defense production. It is well known that there are many machine tools outside the machine-tool industry. Yet Mr. Knudsen, though Secretary Morgenthau assigned him to coordinate machine-tool production eleven months ago, has never taken the obvious step of ordering a survey of machine-tool capacity. The dollar-a-year men he has drawn from the machine-tool industry to run our machine-tool program are hostile to the idea of letting the business out of their hands. I told last week how Mr. Knudsen had permitted the wishes of the automobile manufacturers to prevail over the needs of defense. He has allowed the wishes of the machine-tool industry to dominate production of machine tools. When the research division of the defense setup suggested a survey of machine-tool capacity last year, it was ordered to keep hands off, because "this was being taken care of" by the machine-tool division. The other day I asked A. B. Einig, assistant chief of the Machine Tools Section of the OPM—he comes from the Motch and Merryweather Machinery Company—whether his section was making such a survey. "We're making them all the time," was Mr. Einig's answer. But when I asked whether he had any figures on the machine-tool capacity in the automobile industry and the extent to which it might be diverted to defense production, he said I'd have to "ask the automobile people." Mr. Knudsen is one of the "automobile people." I asked about the machine-tool capacity in the radio-manufacturing industry. Philco, in Philadelphia, for example, has a first-rate machine-tool shop of its own which has been making machines to manufacture violet-ray toilet seats, not the most pressing of defense items. "We're taking care of that sort of thing," said Mr. Einig, "by shutting off their supply of materials." It did not seem to occur to him that he might take care of it by giving Philco defense work to do. With a few exceptions, machine-tool builders, whether dollar-a-yearing in Washington or working in their plants, are humanly uninterested in sharing their orders with other business men. They have expanded their plants and want to keep them busy as long as possible.

I have been trying for two weeks to make a survey of my own, and I think I have uncovered enough to show that the men in charge of the OPM are still very far from an "all-out" effort in this field. I found first of all that even our machine-tool builders are not working at capacity. According to a study of Week-End Shutdowns in Defense Industries in the March issue of the *Monthly Labor Review*, a publication of the Department of Labor, "plant capacity" in eleven major defense industries "was not being utilized to any great extent beyond a single shift per day." This includes machine tools. The record of machine tools in this respect seems a little better than the average, but not much. Of forty-five machine-tool plants covered by the survey, two were on one shift, twenty-nine on two shifts, fourteen on three shifts. But in the plants operating two shifts, less than 20 per cent of the workers were employed on the second shift. In the plants working three shifts, less than 25 per cent were on the second shift and less than 8 per cent on the third shift. I found government officials familiar with the problem afraid to talk of it for fear of getting into trouble with the machine-tool dollar-a-year men. One said that he thought production of machine tools could be stepped up 40 per cent in a few months by going on a twenty-four-hour shift, with a five-three-one ratio, which he felt was the most efficient. That is, the second shift would have three-fifths as many workers as the first and the third one-third as many as the second. This seems moderate and reasonable enough.

Officials with whom I talked at the A. F. of L.'s Machinists' Union advanced several explanations for this failure of the industry to work at full capacity despite the enormous demand for machine tools. One is that the builders hate to pay any more overtime than necessary. Another is that it takes a more attractive wage rate to make men work "the graveyard shift." These union

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

officials felt that the shortage of skilled labor for twenty-four-hour operation could be taken care of by releasing skilled men now employed in the tool-and-die shops of private industry. These industries don't like to give up their skilled men and keep many of them working in ordinary production jobs. Wages aren't high enough to attract the thousands of skilled journeymen whom insecurity of employment drove into other occupations during the past decade. The A. F. of L. men seemed to think that one of the major obstacles was connected with the problem of unionism. The machine-tool manufacturers, the main support of the notorious Metal Trades Association, have generally been strongly anti-union, and most of the industry is open shop. "They have built up a docile non-union labor force over past years," one A. F. of L. official said, "and are afraid that new men may bring in new ideas, particularly the idea of organizing a union." They prefer when necessary to work a certain amount of overtime rather than to hire new men for additional shifts.

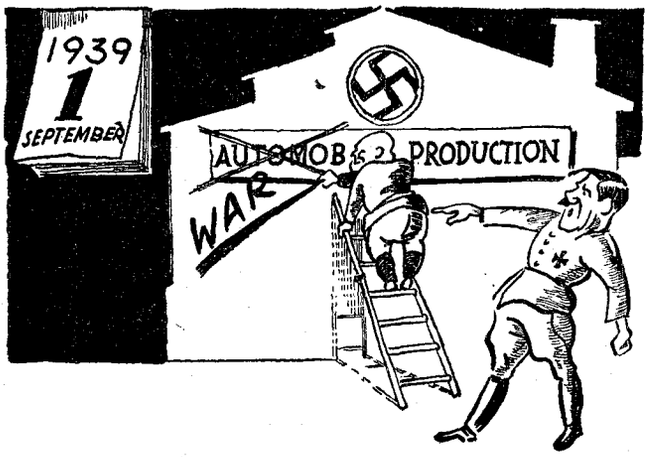
A Bureau of Labor Statistics study recently released dealt with estimated labor requirements for the machine-tool industry under the defense program. It covered plants which employed 22,206 wage-earners in January, and though it disclosed a comparatively small percentage of discharges, it showed a high percentage of turnover because so many men quit their jobs. In the last half of 1940 about 6,000 men had quit their jobs in these plants. This indicates poor labor conditions. The survey also disclosed that while there would soon be shortages of labor in some lines, there was still a large reservoir of jobless skilled machinists. The survey examined figures of the United States Employment Service records as of last December 28 and compared the number of skilled men in various lines seeking jobs with the estimated additional number of men which would be required by the industry this year. Of eleven categories of skilled machinists, there were prospective shortages in four but surpluses of jobless in the other seven over the estimated additional men required. Thus there were 5,217 drill-press operators out of work as compared with an estimated additional requirement this year of 875.

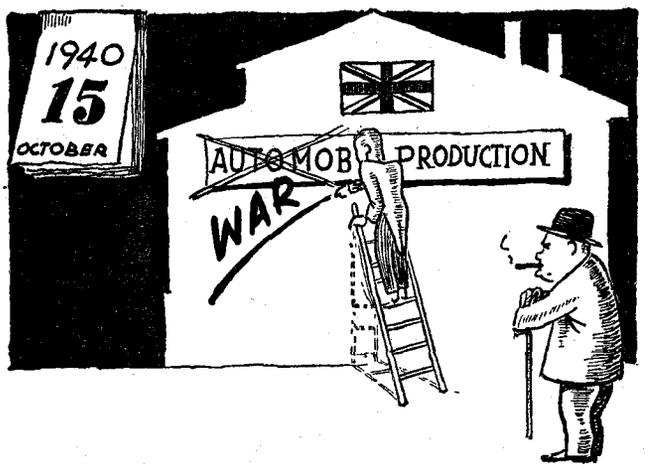
This labor survey also reveals the failure of the machine-tool industry to ease pressure by subcontracting. The Bureau of Labor Statistics found that in the last quarter of 1940 subcontracting ("in the sense that a given plant, finding its productive capacity overtaxed, seeks outside assistance in the fabricating of parts or whole units that normally could be processed in its own shop") amounted to only about 22 per cent of machine-tool production. Yet our economy has huge areas of unused machine-shop capacity which could be tapped immediately by subcontracting. I spoke with one minor OPM official who has just returned from a tour of the machine shops in the Southwest which formerly serviced the oil industry and now have little work because of government curtailment of oil production. There are many other industries which can make parts of machine tools or machine tools as a whole. "Interesting examples of such adaptations," the report says, "are firms ordinarily engaged in the manufacture of rugs, printing presses, and shoe machinery that are now, under license, building complete machine tools on a subcontract basis. Many other manufacturing industries are known to be making parts which are finished and assembled in the plants of the primary machine-tool companies." I was told by tool-and-die workers in Detroit that Mr. Knudsen's own industry is one of the best-equipped to make tools for defense and that it could do so if it gave up new models and turned its present tool-and-die equipment to this task.

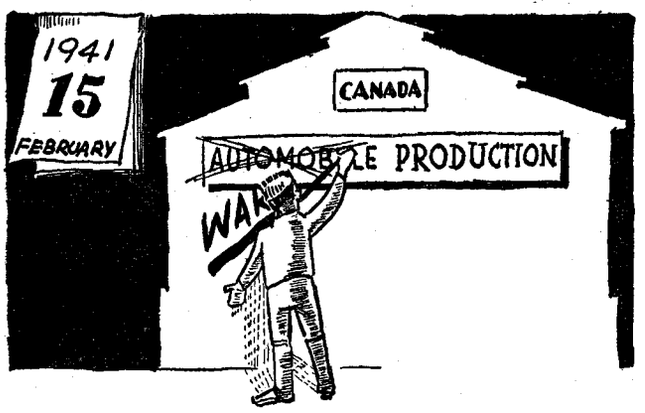
Machine tools are made with machine tools. It is true that the modern machine-tool industry, highly specialized, uses some very complicated special-purpose machines. But in a fire, if one cannot find a hose, one uses a bucket. It may be less efficient, but the house may burn down while one writes to a mail-order firm for a brand-new hose. Industry in this country has an enormous reservoir of machine tools that could be used for the manufacture of machine tools. The 1940 survey of machine tools by the *American Machinist* showed more than 1,323,000 machine tools in industry. Almost 200,000 of these were in the automobile and automobile-parts industries. I was told by a government official engaged in studying the problem that the machine-tool industry at the beginning of this year had about 25,000 machines. The productivity of these machines is, of course, very high, and a mere quantitative comparison may be misleading. What these figures do show is that our machine-tool bottleneck is, as it were, above the ears. It is not like the aluminum bottleneck, which must wait on plant expansion. The machine-tool bottleneck can be eased at any time by a willingness to subordinate business as usual, by emergency methods of production and procurement, by an expansion of subcontracting. Those industries, like automobiles, which crowd their production into part of the year could make many machines available for machine-tool and other work if their present production were spread evenly over the year.

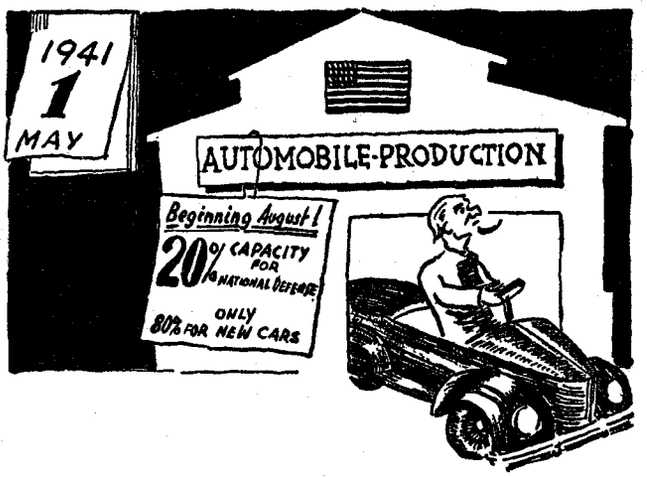
In this respect the problem of speeding production of machine tools is little different from the problem of speeding production of ordnance or planes or tanks. The obstacles are in large part psychological. They spring from the unwillingness or inability of men of the Knudsen type to break away from the habitual and the more profitable way of doing business. It is this state of mind which has stifled what I believe to be the most promising movement in American life toward a true unity and a full mobilization of our resources for defense production. I will tell about that next week.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED









Our Lost Time

BY FRITZ STERNBERG

Drawings by Harry Roth

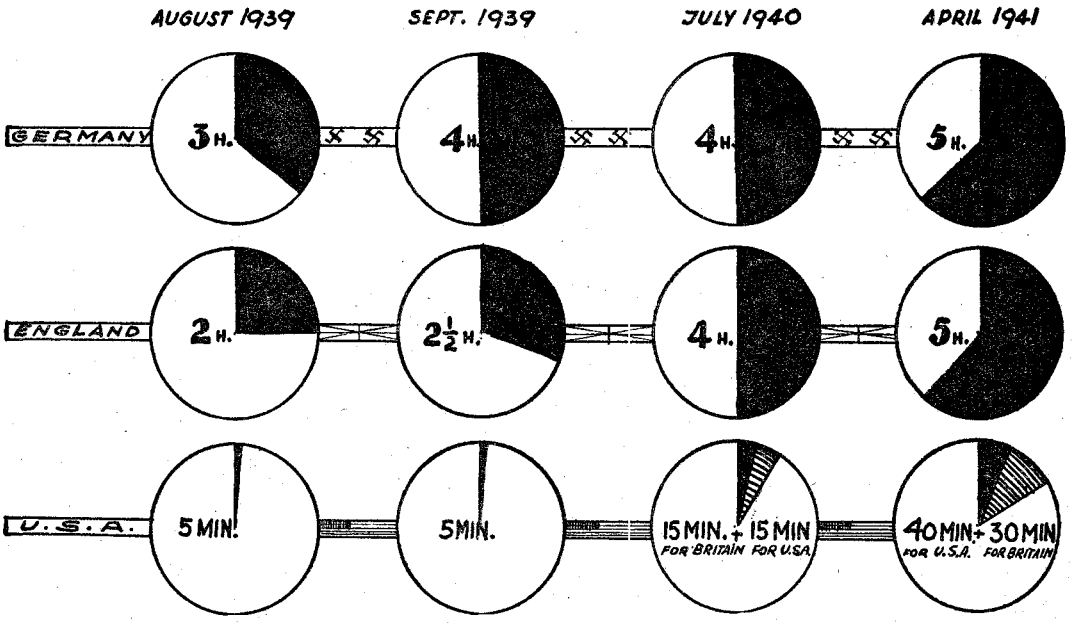
AT THE start of the Second World War Germany had a twofold advantage over its adversaries: it had been turning out great quantities of war materials long before hostilities broke out, and it had ready carefully worked-out plans which enabled it to adapt its peace-time industries to full war production almost overnight. Practically all German automobile plants produced tanks, planes, and military trucks even before the outbreak of war. At the same time they were making a large number of motor cars, measured by German standards. When the war started, all output of automobiles for private consumption was immediately halted. But the automobile factories did not remain idle. All of them were in a position to shift to the production of planes, tanks, and army trucks at a moment's notice. It was the carefully planned reorganization schemes of the German Economic General Staff, worked out before the outbreak of the war, that enabled German tank and plane production to be increased with such startling speed.

In Great Britain, on the other hand, such plans and preparations were virtually non-existent. Chamberlain actually boasted that British armaments production, which was gradually geared up after Munich, hardly interfered with the British economy at all. Automobile production for private consumption continued in Britain after the outbreak of the war; indeed, it continued even under Churchill and after the retreat from Dunkirk. Not until October, 1940, more than thirteen months after the war began, was the production of automobiles for private use prohibited in Great Britain. British automobile plants took that long to complete the necessary adjustments for airplane and tank production. In Canada production of private vehicles was halted on February 15, 1941. During the months after the belligerent countries ceased to produce cars the American output boomed. And no reduction of the American manufacture of automobiles for private consumption is contemplated until August 1, 1941.

It is not surprising, therefore, that American warplane production was so slow getting in motion and that, although it is now increasing every month, it is still small as compared with what this country could do, and still inadequate to cope with the peril threatening us.

Just as American automobile production could be adjusted to war production, so industry as a whole could be adjusted to the manufacture of war material. The first picture on the next page assumes that the total population of each country works eight hours a day; thus labor

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

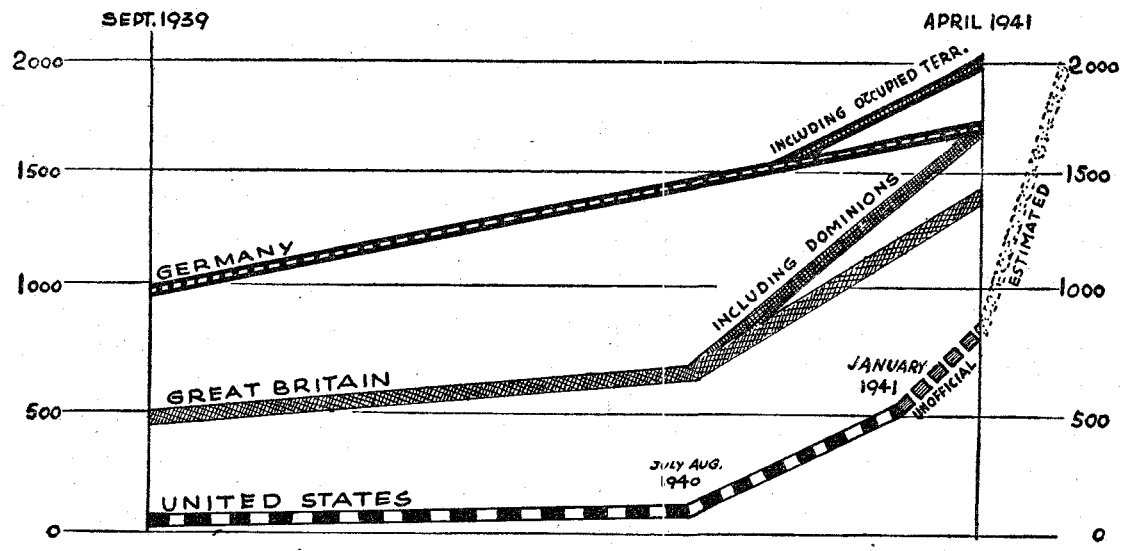


Portion of eight-hour working day devoted to the production of war materials

requiring one hour is the equivalent of one-eighth of the daily national production. As early as August, 1939, Germany was working about three hours a day for defense, while Britain was working only two, and shortly after the outbreak of the war Germany was devoting half of its labor, that is, four hours a day, to armaments. During the same period, August and September, 1939, the American people were devoting only about five minutes a day to defense. At the present time German war production takes up about five hours a day, as does the British. Also in the United States there has been a considerable increase. After Dunkirk America devoted about thirty minutes a day to war production, of which about fifteen minutes were devoted to United States defense and fifteen minutes to supplies for Britain. The Lend-Lease Act, it is hoped, will double our effort in behalf of Britain in the next few months. At present we are working one hour and ten minutes for defense purposes, of which thirty minutes are devoted to aid for Britain. Yet in order to meet even half the industrial requirements of this war, we must give at least two hours' work for defense—one hour for the United States and one hour for Britain.

Estimating the number of working hours spent on war production is merely another way of estimating the cost of war and defense. The picture below illustrates the fact that German military expenditures, which amounted to about $1 billion a month at the beginning of the war, have today risen to $2 billion (taking the tribute paid by the occupied regions at about $400 million), and that British expenditures, which at first were about half the German, have risen to about $1.6 billion.

American military expenditures, which were less than $100 million a month when the Second World War broke out, rose to about $200 million in July-August, 1940, and to about $500 to $600 million in December-January, 1940-41. According to President Roosevelt they will run a little under a billion in the coming fiscal year. But they are likely to exceed this amount by far and, with aid to Britain included, to run about $2 billion a month.



Military expenditures figured in millions of dollars spent per month

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Underground in France

BY LOUIS DOLIVET

NEVER did a border seem more unnatural to me than the unique artificial frontier, the *ligne de démarcation,* which divides France. It was as if a body had been cut in two. I traveled by bicycle from Agen, capital of Lot and Garonne—one of the few rich departments in unoccupied France—to this frontier. After crossing the bridge over the Garonne, guarded on both sides by gendarmes, I pedaled fifty miles on a splendid but completely deserted road. Only once did I meet an automobile—an open car filled with German officers attached to the German Armistice Commission which controls all France. I met it near a small farm. As the *Boches* passed, the farmer, who was working near the road, looked the other way. Then he turned toward me and moved his head slowly up and down, a bitter smile on his lips. In the afternoon I reached the demarcation line.

On one side were a few French gendarmes, on the other a much larger number of German sentries. On both, men and women were standing and looking over to the other side. They had all belonged to the same village until the armistice separated France into "occupied" and "unoccupied" territory. After standing with them, looking and waiting, for some time, I went to find the man who was to get me across the line. It wasn't easy to locate him. First I went to a farm that I had been told about and there found a man who took me to another farm. At nightfall I was led to a third farm where I waited till early dawn. In six months of occupation these peaceful farmers had developed a surprisingly effective technique of underground work. They seemed to enjoy helping someone do something without German authorization.

After dinner the head of the family looked impatiently at his watch. At eight o'clock he locked the door and turned the dials on his radio to find the French broadcast of the B. B. C. When a French voice came on the air, the whole family, even the children, listened in tense silence. From time to time someone whispered a question but was immediately silenced by the others. About half the broadcast was inaudible because the Germans were jamming the air waves.

At three o'clock the farmer woke me up and we went out, zigzagging through the woods and keeping under cover. At one point we had to cross a road which was patroled by Germans. My companion heard them in the distance and pushed me behind a tree. We waited breathlessly till they had gone by; then like rabbits we ran across the road, and I found I had arrived in occupied France.

Later I returned from occupied to unoccupied France by the same route. On both sides of the line I found political activity becoming a part of most men's daily life. Before the defeat of France the bistro, or cafe, was the center of political discussion, and it was there that the agents of the political parties did most of their work. Now the men who gather there are silent, for many arrests have been made among both proprietors and patrons. In the bistros that I visited, old friends concealed any surprise at seeing me again, and the only sign I had of their interest was the firmness of their handclasp. But when we were safe in some farmer's kitchen they spoke with great bitterness about the crimes of fascism and the fatal stupidity of our foreign policy before the war, and uttered a thousand recriminations against their daily misery. There was also a new decisiveness in them, and the old fire blazed in their eyes when they spoke about the revolt which one day would sweep the Nazis out of France.

I made inquiries of various persons, former party secretaries and presidents of local groups, to find the remnants of the political parties. In the old sense of the word, political parties have disappeared. In their stead I found a multitude of new movements, working in secret but extremely active. There were, for example, the Jacobins, the Union for Free France, the Workers' Democratic Revolutionary Union, and the Free Masons. The main purpose of all these groups is to carry on the fight against fascism; never was France more anti-fascist than it is now. They are also vitally interested in the connected problems of social reorganization, economic democracy, Continental union, and world organization. "If we risk our lives to sabotage the German war machine," they asked me, "will England and America make a really better world or shall we have the same old world again?" Every sign of planning for a new world order and for sound peace aims arouses immense interest. A young engineer working in a railroad repair shop said to me, "We're all against Hitler in every way. But if it is for the old order that we fight, we will oppose him half-asleep. If it is for a really democratic world, then we will fight wide-awake and smash him to bits."

In September, 1940, the French people began to come out of the terrible stupor of resignation with which they had accepted the armistice terms, and a political awakening spread through the country. This started in the work-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ers' movements, which had all along offered the chief resistance to the German and French fascist leaders. The only way they could have been won over was to give them freedom of action and good living conditions, but the New Order could hardly be expected to grant either of these. To understand the strength of the workers' resistance, it is necessary to recall the structure of French trade unionism. The most powerful organization in France before the war was undoubtedly the General Federation of Labor, with a membership of five million made up of from 60 to 70 per cent of all wage-earners in the vital industries—metallurgy, mines, and textiles; in the public service—postal, railroad, dock and state employees; and in the educational field. Aside from their defense of the professional and wage interests of the workers, the trade unions considered the defense of democratic principles one of their chief functions. On February 11, 1934, six days after the fascist attempt to seize power, they launched a general strike throughout the country to stop fascism, and after the war started they fought every attempt to set up a dictatorship in France.

After the armistice both the Germans and the Pétain government, using different methods of approach, tried to win the support of the trade unions, or at least to neutralize their activities. The Germans organized immediately a special trade-union department under the leadership of Abetz, assisted by a few members of the German Workers' Front. With typical German system but without any understanding of the underlying political problems, they divided the leading elements in the French trade-union movement into three categories. The first was made up of venal elements, deserters from Socialist and Communist ranks, who could be bribed, and the group writing for the Paris paper *La France au Travail*. The second category was made up of pacifists, those who had opposed collective security and supported the appeasement policy of Georges Bonnet. This group publishes a paper called *l'Atelier*. At its head is Georges Dumoulin, former secretary general of the Northern Trade Union Federation, with headquarters at Lille; another of its leaders is André Vigne, secretary general of the important Coal Miners' Union. The third category included the Christian Trade Unions and the Fascist Trade Union of Doriot and De La Roque. Different arguments designed to appeal to each of these groups were methodically worked out.

For the first, money was the most powerful argument, and the Germans were not sparing in their use of it; but they won over few persons of any authority. The French workers have always required absolute financial integrity of their leaders. Before the war labor leaders who received funds from the Foreign Office had very little influence, and today those known to have the financial support of the Germans have even less. The argument advanced to the second group was that the German authorities would be willing to grant almost complete freedom to those trade-union leaders who had opposed the war. Abetz told them that they were the natural representatives of the policy of French-German cooperation, that Germany would not interfere with the principles of trade-union organization if they would advocate political cooperation. Moreover, the German authorities would aid them in the systematic destruction of Communist influence among the workers.

Just the opposite argument was used with the Communist elements. They were told that the German Reich, bound to Soviet Russia by the famous pact, was not hostile in principle to the work of Communists—in countries other than Germany. French Communists had, therefore, a unique chance to denounce the French and British bourgeoisies, to put the responsibility for the war and the defeat on them, and to fight the moderate elements which advocated cooperation with the democracies.

The Catholic trade unions of the third group were told that the Marxist influence in the workers' movement would be abolished, and that this was sufficient reason for them to support "collaboration." The small fascist unions did not need to be convinced; they accepted German orders without discussion.

Nevertheless, the German penetration in the ranks of the French workers is negligible. Every attempt to create a so-called "atmosphere of understanding" has been defeated by the very strong political traditions of the French workers, and even more by the compelling facts of daily life under German domination—the deterioration of the living conditions of the workers.

The approach of the Vichy government was different. Marshal Pétain thought it would be a masterly stroke to nominate a trade-union representative as a member of his Cabinet. This would satisfy the workers, he thought, but could scarcely strengthen their position in a government of military leaders, great industrialists, and bankers. Accordingly he nominated René Belin, former assistant secretary of the General Federation, to be Minister of National Production and Work. But Pétain failed to realize that Belin had always represented a minority, and that the workers were too wise to accept a policy opposed to their interests just because it was suggested to them by a man belonging to their ranks. Belin moved directly against the workers' movement by dissolving the General Federation and confiscating nearly all the property the organization had acquired over a period of fifty years through the efforts of all the workers. To prevent the workers from organizing a fight against this measure, he also dissolved the Confédération Général du Patronat Français and the Federation of Christian Trade Unions. The opposition of the workers was so strong, however, that the Vichy government did not have the courage to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dissolve the local trade unions, which still exist, though without the right to form a national organization. These local trade unions remain important factors in France. The attempt of the Pétain government to win the support of the labor movement has failed, just as the German attempts have failed in occupied France. The workers are keeping strictly to themselves, however, and are doing everything in their power not to compromise themselves with the German or French authorities.

Their resistance has two aspects—passive and active. The workers do not participate in demonstrations of any kind in favor of Pétain or the other leaders of the new government, and they refuse to join any political or social organization of the new government. Thus they are making it impossible for the Vichy government or fascist leaders in occupied France to build up mass support. At the same time they are organizing a very effective information service, spreading the news from English and American radios and other sources by word of mouth and sometimes distributing pamphlets. After October, 1940, when it became evident that the Germans did not dare to invade Great Britain, hundreds of "resistance groups" sprang up all over the country. These are made up of four or five men working with great caution, in contact with other groups through one man only; so that no treachery can cause mass arrests. These groups have planned and put through an increasing number of acts of sabotage. No French or other correspondent has reported the following incidents:

In Lille a hundred truckloads of ammunition and machines ready to be sent to Germany were blown up. Unable to discover the saboteurs, the German authorities decided to punish the workers by imposing a large cut in wages. A delegation of twenty workers was sent to inform the civil and military German authorities that the workers refused to accept this decree and that they threatened a general strike in Lille. The German in command ordered the delegation to obey the orders of the occupation government; when they refused and the agitation increased, he gave orders that all members of the delegation should be executed. This kind of "discipline," however, failed to stop daily acts of sabotage in that region.

At Chartres the telephone lines to the German-controlled airdrome were cut. For this a fifteen-year-old boy, who refused to give the names of his coworkers, was sentenced to death, but a strong demonstration, principally by women, before the headquarters of the German general obtained a promise from him that the boy would not be executed. It is not known whether the general kept his promise.

The town of Nantes was fined five times, nearly nine million francs in all, to pay for sabotage on railroad and telephone lines and in factories, but the solidarity of the saboteurs was so great that not a single one was discovered.

In unoccupied France, not far from Marseilles, 200 railroad cars filled with ammunition for Germany were blown up. Traces of this explosion can still be seen in the many demolished buildings near the railroad station. The French, German, and Italian authorities who were guarding the station were unable to prevent this very systematically prepared act of sabotage.

The French workers will not fight for a return of the old order. They desire the defeat of Hitlerism but if they are to fight for it, they must know something more about peace aims. Violent discussions of this subject have been carried on by the Communists and Socialists in the French workers' movement. After the armistice Communist propaganda was directed, in the main, toward a social revolution and against "world plutocracy," with no reference to fighting the invader. However, after four months of Nazi occupation public feeling had mounted so high that the Communists began to attack the Germans. But at the same time they attacked British capitalism, suggesting that for the workers there was little choice between the two evils. This attitude found scant sympathy among the workers. Since the end of November, and especially since the beginning of this year, the Communists have been supporting, to some extent, General de Gaulle's movement—it is difficult to say whether this was a spontaneous move on the part of the rank and file or suggested by national or international leaders. It was after they took this position that a number of prominent Communists were arrested in occupied and unoccupied France.

The majority of the workers are convinced that a better social order will result from a victory of the democracies, that they will then be able to make fundamental changes in the social structure and move toward an economic democracy. The influence of the British trade unions has immensely increased in France, and men like Bevin have great popularity among the workers. In their discussions they frequently stress the point that a man coming from the workers' ranks has been able to play a great role in the war and that he has been more competent than many representatives of the ruling classes. They believe that the British trade-union movement will be able to keep, and even to increase, its power after the war, and that this fact will greatly help the workers in other countries. Many believe that sooner or later Soviet Russia will come in on the side of the democracies. It is a weakness of British propaganda that very few trade unionists speak in the French broadcasts of the B. B. C. or even from the American short-wave station in Boston. Also, the words "democracy" and "independence" have too general a meaning to rouse the workers in occupied countries, and the use of such vague terms does not help to clarify the aims or strengthen the cause of the democracies.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Odds on Maverick

BY CHARLES CURTIS MUNZ

San Antonio, May 21

THE mayoralty term to which Maury Maverick was elected two years ago is coming to an end. His administration has been mildly liberal, not at all radical; mainly honest and enlightened. This is so marked a departure from San Antonio's usual corruption that one would think his reelection would be practically unanimous. It will not be. Maverick bears the liberal taint, and many of the powers that be in San Antonio frankly prefer conservatism and corruption. For the two years of his term as mayor Maverick's foes have harassed him every step of the way. But Maverick is both resourceful and courageous, and he is fighting a strong campaign for reelection on May 13.

Maury Maverick

A year ago his reelection looked quite impossible. The newspapers of the city groaned when Maverick remodeled the mayor's office. They cried out when he had the city buy an official car—and they chortled when the car caught fire and was damaged. They howled when he hired a professionally trained police chief from Illinois, an alien and a damyankee to boot. But all this was nothing to the sport the boys had when they drove Emma Tenayucca and her Communist cohorts out of the Municipal Auditorium. When Emma Tenayucca asked for the permit, Maverick courageously gave it to her—on the obvious ground that the Constitution of the United States grants civil liberties even to those who abuse them. But not many people in San Antonio appreciated either his courage or his zeal for the Constitution.

That commotion had scarcely subsided when Maverick was attacked from another direction: foes of his in the county political ring charged him with paying the poll tax of another person, which is a felony in Texas. Although the prosecutors never had any real hope of convicting him on the flimsy evidence, there was always a chance that a hostile jury would convict him on prejudice. This effort came to nothing when Maverick was acquitted, but his prosecutors had partially succeeded in their main object, which was simply to harass him and hamper his administration as much as possible.

Next Maverick made what turned out to be a serious political error. He already had some friends in the courthouse, notably the sheriff and the tax assessor, and in the primary campaign last summer he set out to capture all the county offices. But the Mayor was in bad political odor, and his campaign was poorly organized. His forces not only failed to gain any new county office but lost those they already held. Every one of the Maverick candidates was overwhelmingly beaten. The whole campaign was an ignominious failure.

His enemies were happily sure that Maverick's career was at an end, and a good many of his friends thought so, too. But Maverick had in fact struck bottom. He started rebuilding his organization. At the same time the good work of his administration, which he had managed somehow to get done between court trials and political fights, began to show results. Though the newspapers had howled at the alien police chief, the evidence was too plain to deny that he was doing a good job. The potbellied officers on the streets were replaced by younger, upstanding men; and the statistics bore out the story of a revitalized police department. The health department was thoroughly overhauled; the tax department made a long overdue survey of real-estate values. The prostitutes that had thronged the streets during the Quin regime were persuaded to move to less conspicuous quarters. All this was merely good government, not especially liberal and certainly not spectacular. The only thing about the whole record that even the most bitter could call radical was the Communist meeting, and that was receding into the background.

Maverick's stock picked up a little. The rising movement, once started, was helped along by a chain of four important developments. The first was the restoration of a section of the city called La Villita, which contains some interesting old houses. Maverick obtained financial help from the Carnegie Foundation and the National Youth Administration, and set out to make La Villita a pan-American center and a workshop for teaching trades and crafts to the Mexican youth of San Antonio. This restoration project has attracted international attention. Brazil, for example, is furnishing Caxias House, named for one of its heroes, and Mexico has presented a heroic statue of Hidalgo. The Bolivar Building will be a pan-American library and museum. The army chiefs of Latin

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

America, during their recent visit to the United States, saw La Villita and were much impressed with this visible evidence of friendship. In the workshops several hundred young Mexican men and women are learning various trades and crafts. Maverick regards La Villita as the New Deal in action in San Antonio. As a pan-American center it symbolizes the good-neighbor policy, and as a workshop it is helping to provide the Mexican youths with a basis for future security.

The next thing that helped Maverick was the bountiful subsidy he secured from the federal government for a new city airport costing $3,000,000. Part of the money would have been obtained anyway, but Maverick's Washington connections were worth at least an extra million. This was a deed for which some of the members of the Chamber of Commerce are willing to forgive Maverick his sins. Third in this chain of developments was the appointment of Robert E. Lucey to be the new archbishop of San Antonio. The late archbishop, A. J. Drossaerts, was a bitter conservative. The new archbishop is a friend of Roosevelt's, and is said to be about the most liberal member of the Catholic hierarchy in America. This sharp change in the political climate of the archdiocese is extremely important in a city where much more than half the population is Catholic.

Finally, by a great stroke of luck for Maverick, former Mayor C. K. Quin emerged as the principal opposition candidate. Maverick defeated him two years ago. A stronger candidate had been sought, but Quin put himself in the race while the other hopefuls were still talking, and the Maverick opposition was forced to accept him. He brings back unhappy memories of the old machine, however, and some opponents of Maverick are going to find it difficult to vote for Quin. They will probably go fishing on Election Day. As one rabid hater of Maverick put it, "Well, if it's between Maverick and Quin, Maverick will win easily."

But the outcome is really not that certain. The plurality that won for Maverick in 1939 will not suffice now, for a new law makes a majority necessary. Maverick's organization has been strengthened, and his campaign has been pretty well financed. Quin seems to be short of money, for his workers are reported to be out scratching for $2 contributions. But despite the progress Maverick has made, the hatred for him in certain circles is unrelenting. The taint of liberalism clings to him. So the election is likely to be close, perhaps as close as the Congressional election of 1938, when Maverick lost by about 500 votes. If so, three or four vanity candidates, who otherwise amount to nothing, may get enough votes between them to force a run-off. But a run-off would not be likely to alter the final result. On the whole, it seems probable that Maverick has a slight edge. As one observer put it, "I'd bet even money, either way, but I'd sleep a little easier with my money on Maverick."

In the Wind

SOCIETY NOTE: Colonel McCormick's Chicago *Tribune* recently published in its society column this excerpt from a letter by a London correspondent: "One leads a curious life. Everyone seems to have gone away from London, and one meets few one knows, and no going out at all evenings. It's really very dull with so much war talk and so many in jail—you'd be surprised to hear of those 'in society' who have been arrested!"

WHEN PLANS for this year's May Day parade in New York were being made, the Socialist Workers' Party (Trotskyites) asked the United May Day Committee for permission to participate. They were refused—on the ground that the parade was "non-political." The Communist Party marched as a unit.

A STRIKE at the Erie plant of the Continental Rubber Company was listed in the press as a stoppage of defense industry. Actually, the plant makes rubber mountings for wastebaskets, ash trays, and the like. Its chief order at the time of the strike was for wastebasket mountings for the OPM offices in Washington.

WHEN SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS first arrived in Moscow as British ambassador, he tried, according to a recent arrival from the Russian capital, to get into the spirit of the Soviets and live as far as possible like an ordinary citizen. Lawrence Steinhardt, the American envoy, noticed Cripps's attempts to be a good proletarian and felt that this was bad strategy for a British ambassador trying to win cooperation from the Russians. Steinhardt called Cripps aside and advised him to act his part, that of a British peer and diplomat. Cripps, who realized that his mission had not been altogether successful, took Steinhardt's advice and put on his old school tie. A few days later he reported back to Steinhardt and said that his proposals were getting a much better hearing.

OPPOSITION to the present administration of the American Newspaper Guild has developed in many places. In six large cities—Philadelphia, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Milwaukee—anti-administration delegates have already been chosen to represent their locals at the Guild convention in Detroit this summer.

AMERICAN ROCK, the new political party organized by William Goodwin, Father Coughlin's Eastern representative, and Joe McWilliams, will enter the New York elections this fall. It will support either Attorney General Bennett or John Cashmore, borough president of Brooklyn, as Democratic candidate for mayor.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Rats, Lice, and History

An Image of the United States Senate

BY R. P. BLACKMUR

"There is no precedence between a louse and a flea."—Dr. Johnson.

That man who keeps the diary
is there, his eyes like running mice;
ambassador plenipotentiary,
he says, to bargain fleas for lice.

Who sent him? whom he bargains for?
or what he'd sound like if he spoke?
or look like if he closed that door?
all's doubtless written in his book.

But we don't know. We only know
he's here, his hand upon the knob
of the big door. The rest we grow
aware of, like an engine throb.

He's not a senator, that's sure;
none of the page boys even see him;
there's nothing about him to endure;
you don't want to delouse or flea him.

—Is it the odor of almonds creeps
down the aisles, between the rows,
heavier than air? than sleep?
that each man smells, but never knows?

Or is it the belling sound of words,
The vision of mankind that you see,
that can be only overheard,
is my vision's greatest enemy?

That's why the senators can't keep still
but each one, conscious of his face,
unconscious of his driving will,
scurries and squeaks from desk to dais,

and he who has been recognized
(anyone can be, somebody must)
looks on all fours, and undersized,
gnawing darkness like a crust.

That man who keeps the diary,
suppose he opened up that door,
would he be live, be you, be me?
be recognized upon the floor?

Or would the bitter almond rise,
the rising gorge of full ill ease,
and all the lice, as each one dies,
take precedence with all the fleas?

Most like that door's a solid wall
that cannot open save it fall.
Most like that diarist's the ghost
that speaks the actual we have lost.

Louis Fischer's Autobiography

MEN AND POLITICS: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY. By Louis Fischer. Duell, Sloan, and Pearce. $3.50.

IN *The Nation* for January 9, 1924, appeared a quarter-column announcement: Louis Fischer, whose "information for Mr. Hughes" appeared on page 30, it said, would sail again for Russia in a short time. He was in close touch with various Soviet officials, but maintained a critical detachment which made his articles historically valuable. He would be *The Nation's* Russian correspondent "for the next few months."

He was *The Nation's* Russian correspondent for more than twelve years. Then he was *The Nation's* Spanish correspondent, and then its correspondent-at-large. He has been a part of *The Nation,* month after month, for close to twenty years.

Nation readers may think they know this Louis Fischer; and, indeed, some chapters of this 657-page "autobiography" are rewritten from its pages. *The Nation* is a part of Louis Fischer, as he is a part of it. But he has coyly kept his self out of his articles; and he is almost as coy in this "autobiography." It is easier to learn the facts of Lenin's, Stalin's, Chicherin's, Hitler's, Dr. Negrín's, Constancia de la Mora's, or Winston Churchill's life from this book than of Louis Fischer's. Nevertheless, by careful rereading, annotation, and tabulation, I have been able to fit a few biographical facts together. Louis Fischer, in writing this book, was as ingenious as a jigsaw-puzzle carver to shuffle and conceal them.

Louis Fischer was born above a delicatessen store in the fish and chicken market at Fourth and Monroe Streets, Philadelphia, in 1896 (page 299). His father was an orthodox Jew, a factory worker, then a fish-and-fruit peddler. Until Louis was sixteen he never lived in a house with electricity, running water, an inside lavatory, or central heating; so he never dreaded poverty. He was used to living cheap.

What schools he attended he does not say. He read Kropotkin's "Memoirs of a Revolutionist" avidly in 1916; he had already devoured the great Russian novels. But he has no memory of reading of either of the Russian revolutions of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1917; the news made no impression on him (page 46)! His family background led him into the Zionist movement ("it was not conviction but just glide"); sometime in the summer of 1917 he volunteered to serve in the Jewish Legion recruited to help reconquer the Holy Land (page 240). He trained in Canada and reached Palestine about the time of the Armistice. Perforce, he remained in the British army until 1920. That experience dimmed his Zionism and left him dubious about upper-class Englishmen.

"With the exception of teaching school in Philadelphia for half a year and work in a New York news agency in 1920," says Louis Fischer, "I have never held a job and I have always tried hard not to get one." (That, on page 160, is the only mention in the book of either job.) But he forgot. In 1925 for four months he worked in the "Tass" office in London (page 208); in 1928 he substituted for Frederick Kuh in the United Press bureau in Berlin for two months (page 599); in 1934, 1935, and 1936 he led summer parties through Russia for the Open Road (page 217). He had gone to Russia in the summer of 1922 as a free-lance correspondent for the New York *Evening Post,* paying his own way (page 13); after 1924 he had papers as correspondent for *The Nation,* but no salary (page 70); as the years passed and his reputation grew, he built up his own private international syndicate, often selling the same article to the London *New Statesman,* the Paris *Europe Nouvelle,* the German refugee *Weltbühne,* and to dailies in Oslo, Stockholm, Prague, and elsewhere (page 323). He wrote when he liked, and as he liked; and until 1929 Markoosha, whom he married in 1922, supported herself and the two boys, born in 1923 and 1924, entirely.

Markoosha was "a slim native of Libau, Latvia; she was Russian in her unconventional spirit, German in her education, a pianist by profession, a psychologist by natural endowment." Louis Fischer met her in New York in 1920; she returned to Europe in the spring of 1921; and she was one of the main reasons why Louis followed in December. Of course, she had much to do with his going to Russia, and with his falling in love with Russia; and, in the later years, with his disillusionment. I wish there were more about Markoosha in "Men and Politics." The subtitle, at least, would have permitted it.

"I never thought of Soviet Russia as a Utopia," says Louis Fischer. "I knew when I first went there in September, 1922, that I was going to a land of starvation. . . . In Lenin's Russia of 1922 I looked not for a better present but for a brighter future. I also expected clean politics and a foreign policy that rejected conquest, colonies, imperialism, and the lying that is often synonymous with diplomacy."

At first he found what he was looking for. He saw Lenin (already sick) and Trotsky ("fiery, flamboyant, penetrating . . . the tenor . . . the peacock, performer, charmer") preaching Puritan morals. (Louis Fischer, himself a kind of Puritan, liked that; the Puritanism of early Russian communism obviously was one of its chief appeals to him.) He revisited Russia regularly; it became his home. He played poker, apparently his only vice, with the correspondents; he watched the dramatic Savinkov trial in 1924; he had six and a half hours with Stalin in 1927; more important, he became uniquely intimate with Chicherin, the Soviets' aristocratic Foreign Minister, with Litvinov, his successor, with Joffe, Rakovsky, and dozens of lesser Soviet leaders, most of whom have now disappeared. Every year he went out to Germany. And he wrote, copiously and illuminatingly, for *The Nation.* At first he wrote almost as much about Germany as about Russia; and in 1925 a young German wrote a letter to *The Nation* correcting Fischer's facts. The German said he had been in prison thirteen, not six months. *The Nation* printed the letter. The German's name was Adolf Hitler!

Fischer also wrote two books, one a study of "Oil Imperialism," the other his two-volume "The Soviets in World Affairs." Litvinov once said that he kept this latter book on his desk for reference. It was in compiling material for his books that Louis Fischer made his extraordinary friendships. Most foreign correspondents are themselves performers; they like to talk, particularly about themselves. Louis Fischer was a good listener; and when he talked, he talked politics, never about himself. The Russians liked that. They also respected his sympathetic independence. He neither fooled nor flattered them; he argued with them on their own terms, in their own language.

Chicherin read proofs of Fischer's books—this "autobiography" includes poignant and revealing letters from him; Litvinov sent Fischer to Rakovsky in exile—with a disguised letter of introduction that is a story in itself; Rakovsky dug into his voluminous files; Joffe, five days before committing suicide, showed Fischer papers on the Russian share in the German revolution of 1918; Karakhan permitted him to print a photograph of the Soviet diplomat playing tennis with King Amanullah of Afghanistan as his partner (that is another good story). No foreigner ever had a more intimate contact with Soviet diplomacy. His two-volume book was translated into Russian; Radek wrote an introduction for it; but it was never printed. Radek asked Stalin, and Stalin said no.

After 1936 Louis Fischer wrote no more articles about Russia—until the Soviet-German pact released his inhibitions. In 1936 the great purges began; "literally a massacre of Soviet talent occurred in 1937"; it became a "bloody pogrom" in 1937-38. Fischer returned to Moscow and, sick at heart, pondered the meaning of the trials. It was not easy to throw away the vision to which he had been attached for fifteen years; and Russia was still, somewhat, and alone among the great powers, aiding Spain. After 1936 Louis Fischer wrote about Spain instead of about Russia. There again he became the confidant of the leaders (sometimes he writes as if he had personally conducted the Spanish Republic); and in this book he tells stories he could not tell at the time in *The Nation,* about both Spain and Russia. No one else has achieved the objectivity and discernment of his analysis of the change in Russia.

So Louis Fischer has come home to the America he never knew and has written his story of the Europe he knew too well. Correspondents are becoming as important as diplomats, and both write books. But Louis Fischer's "Men and Politics" is unique, both in its insights and its intimacies. It is unique also in Louis Fischer's own writing, for its flashes of wit, its abundance of personal anecdote—about almost everybody except Louis Fischer himself. The old Puritan!

LEWIS GANNETT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Divided We Are Falling

UNITED WE STAND! DEFENSE OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE. By Hanson W. Baldwin. Whittlesey House. $3.

"DIVIDED WE ARE FALLING" might well be the title of this book. "Germany," says Hanson Baldwin, "prepared for *this* war; France prepared for the *last* war; Britain prepared for *no* war. Today we stand somewhere between France and Britain. Too many of our preparations have been for the *last* war; too many for *no* war of reality." He documents this verdict with a wealth of somber detail. "Stand" we can if we put our best minds and full strength to the task, but as yet, in his judgment, we have used neither. Two major problems are as yet unsolved.

The first confronts every democratic state; the second, in an acute form at least, only ours. The country is not united. It is not yet alarmed by the emergency it is facing. As yet our democratic processes have not declared what is "the overwhelming wish of the overwhelming majority" of the people. Mr. Baldwin thinks that the American democracy is not having effective leadership in making up its mind. It is not being asked what we are prepared to defend by force, and if offense is the best defense where and to what extent it should be directed.

But after this initial problem is resolved, an efficient directing organization is necessary. Mr. Baldwin outlines again the sad situation in Washington, of which he and many others have long complained. There is no organization for "sound coordinated planning." There is no realization of the fact that defense plans must include political and economic weapons. The President attempts to do too much himself. Military and naval and air policy are under the Joint Board—on which the army and navy have equal representation—and its history "has often been one of stultification and stalemate." It gets civilian direction and drive only in the moments that the President can devote to the Chief of Staff or the Chief of Naval Operations, and these are inadequate to prevent conflicts of authority and duplications of effort.

For example, we have "such absurdities as the recent order that prohibited army land planes from flying farther than 100 miles off our coast, for that was the navy's domain." The country—despite huge appropriations and the optimistic professions of those in high places—still has "no unified air service, no unified procurement, no unified training, and no well-developed, unified concept of the use of air power." Instead, the new base sites in Bermuda "show an undesirable duplication of effort between the army and navy air forces." There are to be two plane bases when one would have been enough. Within each of the services there are silly jealousies.

Mr. Baldwin has extremely detailed and informing chapters on the navy, the army, and the air force. He recounts some advances and records a good many disappointments. The absence of any machinery which can view our policy as a whole and can decide which things should come first has had serious consequences, which, happily, as yet have not been catastrophic. He is more optimistic in respect of the navy and the air force than he is in respect of the army. He thinks the army less efficient than it was a year ago, before abilities and skills had to be scattered to participate in the training of hordes of raw recruits. He thinks that the conscription bill had little thought behind it and that the creation of a larger professional army, heavily armored, would have been far more sensible than the building of a mass army. Conscription could have been applied to give a year or two of training to men as they reached twenty or twenty-one. Now, however, he thinks it too late to retrace many steps. The army we have is the kind of army that the General Staff did not want and one which it had never urged on Congress. To be sure it accepted this army without protest, and its acquiescence was probably not unconnected with the acceleration of promotion which results from greater and greater numbers.

It is vain to hope, in the trite phrase, that "United We Stand" will be read by "every intelligent citizen." It is too serious, too closely reasoned, and too replete with facts, figures, and tables to be an outstanding popular success. But those who are making or who are neglecting to make decisions that will prepare or fail to prepare this country should ponder Mr. Baldwin's 300-odd pages. These have permitted him a scope impossible in newspaper or magazine articles. He surveys the crisis with extended view—literally from China to Peru. He does not conceal his own opinions on matters outside his specialty of military science. Some readers may object to sweeping judgments. Thus he says that the State Department, "pitiably clinging to the fine outmoded aspirations of the past, stymies the people's will and the national effort by the tedious process of kidgloved diplomacy in an era in which speed of achievement is imperative and the mailed fist is the only understandable language," but his description of the nature of the "era" cannot be challenged. His book will add further to the high reputation he has made for himself in the field of military and naval analysis—a department of American journalism in which he and a few other practitioners of his art are doing excellent service. Would that they were more frequently read by those in the seats of the mighty!

LINDSAY ROGERS

A Lively Sermon

BEGIN HERE. By Dorothy L. Sayers. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

SPEAKING to her fellow-countrymen in the last days of 1939, Miss Sayers exhorted them to take thought about the incipient war and not to be futurists about the better world to follow it. For their guidance she reviewed with a masterly brevity and simplicity the main currents of European history feeding the whirlpool of the present. She now addresses the same words, with a new preface, to the American public, and on a second reading eighteen months later the little work remains both moving and apposite. Not that Miss Sayers appeals to any conventional feelings we may be supposed to have about Great Britain or the world. On the contrary she flies very efficiently in the face of all the glib talk about new world orders and the complacent explanations of the way things came to be as they are. She is, as attentive readers of her fiction and drama will have noted, a competent historian, a philosopher, and an artist. The result is that she

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

brings to bear on the contemporary chaos the calmness born of historical perspective, the clarity of a logician, and the concreteness that belongs to art.

When she says, "Begin here," she means simply that there is no reason to suppose this war will be the last, the worst, or the best in history. It will not work miracles, and consequently any better world we may desire must be built piece by piece by ourselves through the choices and acts we are making and doing now. She repudiates in fact any theory of linear and fated evolution, any automatism moving us toward good or ill, and she vindicates human purpose operating on the small scale where its effects are undoubted and familiar. She knows, moreover, that the decisions affecting the fate of nations depend upon the ideas of life, conduct, government, and faith which are abroad among the people, whether democratic or totalitarian. She must therefore remind her listeners—British and American—of their own shortcomings as judged by the very standards which they would enshrine in the "new order." The passion for absolutes, the yearning for an impossible static security, the dread of original thought, the repudiation of Christian morality, the naive faith in machinery—both industrial and administrative—the actual neglect of vaunted cultural values—these are so many failures of brain and heart which Miss Sayers berates in words no less justified than eloquent. Two pages on the gaping indifference of the English public to art—the art which that same public fitfully pretends to cherish and defend against totalitarian attack—are worthy of inclusion in the great collection of anti-philistine documents. But the author's wit and invective imply no loss of proportion. She orders her argument in such a way that its many parts, from an economic fact to a piece of introspective psychology, fall into place without strain and without surplusage.

Enough has been said to show that Miss Sayers is no doctrinaire. Though she clearly believes in a transcendent reality which is Christian, she is not proselytizing for any church and she does not hope more from organizations than from single "conversions." But she believes that without intelligence and will somewhere no social or cultural salvation is possible. One can quarrel with some of her historical judgments, notably that on the doctrine of natural rights; and one can regret that she has chosen for some of her short and lucid chapters mottoes from long-winded and thorny writers, but no one can deny that her fresh and forthright sermon is worth the closest study, simply as a piece of pointed reflection and quite aside from the clear-eyed statement of faith that it makes.

JACQUES BARZUN

The Rebuttal . . .

—to the logic of dictatorship and exploitation: That because man is an animal—he can be no more than an animal.

HUMANITY ON TRIAL

By HORACE J. BRIDGES

Leader, Chicago Ethical Society

The rise of dictators who created the present world-tragedy can be traced to certain beliefs about the nature and powers of man which are false, but generally accepted because they appear to possess authority of science. This book offers an answer, based on unquestionable facts as to what man is and does, here and now on earth. Presented in the form of a series of illustrations rather than cumulative abstract argument. 324 PAGES $2.50

LIVERIGHT • 386 Fourth Ave. • N. Y.

Nationless Men

WE ESCAPED. Edited by William Allen Neilson. The Macmillan Company. $2.

NINE months ago, while abroad, I had occasion to spend several hours daily for about a week in the courtyard of the consulate general of a great power. Of all the experiences that I have had in recent years that was certainly the most nerve-racking. The strain did not originate in any predicament of mine, for my request was simple and I was treated with courtesy. At the end of each period, however, I was depressed beyond bearing, anxious only to get away and talk—talk about anything and with anyone provided he had, not merely things so prime to man as a home and a job, but a nationality.

A room with a view, a room of one's own, health, money, work—they have been written and written about as if they were important. They did not seem so important then. If you have spent a few hours in a consulate of a neutral or defeated European power, you will know that no symbol is so packed with implicit drama as an invalid passport.

Those who have not seen the faces of nationless men may obtain some idea of what Nazism has done from "We Escaped," a collection of narratives of quite exceptional merit. The simplicity and vigor of these accounts and the entire absence of abnormality in the persons who tell them set the book apart. The Artist from Prague and The Mayor of Ferrol are, I think, two of the best pieces of direct narrative I have read in a long time. It is testimony to the reality of the people in "We Escaped" to say that one or two of them have quirks and traits that I don't like. In general they are fine people, none the less, worth any nation's saving.

The reserve officer from Holland is your quiet gentleman, naive in his political outlook, methodically courageous in necessity; very correct and very Dutch. The anti-Nazi professor from Heidelberg is a brilliant mathematician, confident he can calculate the incidence of floods from some higher theorem of calculus, I believe. I like such a man, and his story is well told. Then the Mayor of Ferrol! Here is a story which I heard from his lips—after he became a waiter in a two-bit beanery. A Spanish Socialist under Alfonso, he became accustomed to arbitrary police and slovenly jailers. Hunted by fascists, he at last found a refuge in the attic of a family of former political opponents. In the most magnificent piece of reticence I know, he says, "I stayed with that family three years." And from that attic, with other men in other attics, he planned his escape. Those Spaniards fabricated comic-opera uniforms of the Civil Guard, of cloth and cardboard dyed with shoe polish. One night they marched through the town as a patrol and stole a steam-driven fishing boat. Their fuel ran out in the Bay of Biscay. They lit a flare of gasoline. A French fishing boat approached and towed them to France, to begin the long pull of getting a visa to America. Well, he's here, and thinking of the day of return to Spain.

RALPH BATES

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Case of Harold Rugg

THAT MEN MAY UNDERSTAND. By Harold Rugg. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.75.

HAROLD RUGG here submits himself to the court of public opinion and serves as his own advocate. He asks 130,000,000 fellow-citizens—or as many of them as his publishers can persuade to attend court—to judge the righteousness of his cause. For the benefit of those unaware of who he is, or that he is on trial at all, he reviews the charges before proceeding with the defense.

Dr. Rugg, professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University, is the author of a series of social-science textbooks widely used in our schools. They are based upon the author's two dominant beliefs: first, that social and political problems of the greatest significance have been too little discussed or have actually been suppressed in the classroom—and, as a consequence, young people have gone out unprepared to live effectively in the world of today; second, that each branch of knowledge taught in our schools, from the three R's to the social sciences, has been so departmentalized and compartmentalized as to make it inapplicable to a society where all vital problems are interrelated.

Fired by these convictions he proceeded to build a series of school texts. He launched them first as mimeographed pamphlets which were tried out by cooperating teachers in many towns and cities. Then they were revised and collected into book form. These books and the experimental pamphlets have been used widely for twenty years, and sales have been phenomenal. Of the pamphlets alone, three-quarters of a million were sold. Since the beginning of the enterprise attacks upon the author and his writings have been periodic and increasingly bitter.

"That Men May Understand" opens with the author's confession of faith in our form of government and a declaration of pride in our nation's past achievements, with some reference to the part played by his own ancestors. Then follows a painfully detailed record of his Herculean labors, with tribute to each of the many other "pioneer thinkers" who collaborated with him; with fact piled upon fact as to total number of words written, pamphlets and books published, and all attendant circumstances.

The pages that follow make livelier reading as he describes the developing attacks upon him—the long campaign, for instance, of his detractors to get his books out of the Englewood schools; the entry of Verne Marshall and M. K. Hart, of Hearst and the "patrioteers" into the struggle; the spread of the war to distant parts. The author finds space to philosophize upon the phenomenon of witch-hunting, and the relation of such periodic outbursts of intolerance to times of national prosperity or depression.

The last few chapters of the book present his theories of education in and for a democracy, and most deserve the permanence of book form. "Alone among the schoolbook authors of America," he writes, "I have refused to dodge the problem of public and private ownership"; and this hints his attitude toward himself and the nature of his pioneering.

> As the years passed I became more and more convinced that democracy could not survive the attacks upon it unless young Americans came to a thorough understanding of the

strike...
strike...
STRIKE!

ARE picket lines turning America against labor? What does the everyday citizen think about the strike? What is his influence? Here, in Alfred Winslow Jones' brilliant study, is the answer to this and other challenging questions that face American democracy. 397 pages, $3.50

★ ★ ★

Alvin Johnson, in the New York Herald Tribune, says: "Mr. Jones in this book has set up a machinery for ascertaining what people think. That makes him rank with the important intellectual pioneers of our time."

Rose M. Stein, in The Nation, says: "A highly provocative book . . . a most heartening testimonial to the vitality of our democracy."

R. L. Duffus, in the New York Times, says: "The results are thought provoking. America, looking at itself and studying its own thinking and feeling, is quite a spectacle."

Winston Phelps, in the Providence Journal, says: "It is entertaining and it is important. It may well be rated one of the most important serious books of the year."

The Christian Science Monitor says: "This book will take a place among the path-breakers. It shows that there is an American way, and that the present social situation is full of hope."

LIFE, LIBERTY, AND PROPERTY

By Alfred Winslow Jones

J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
East Washington Square, Philadelphia, Pa.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

You may buy

BOOKS

through The Nation

At the request of many readers who reside in communities in which no bookshop has been established, *The Nation* offers to deliver any book to your door at the regular publisher's price (postfree) provided payment is received with the order or publisher's price plus postage if sent C.O.D.

Please address your orders to

The Readers' Service Division

The Nation • 55 Fifth Avenue • New York

Don't Miss An Issue!

To keep THE NATION coming regularly

just fill out and sign this form

THE NATION • 55 FIFTH AVE. • NEW YORK

Please enter my subscription for the period indicated below. I inclose $.....

☐ **One Year $5**

☐ **Two Years $8**

☐ **Three Years $11**

Special Introductory Offer to new subscribers only

☐ **13 Weeks $1**

Name.....

Street.....

City.....

State.....

5-10-41

Extra postage per year: Foreign and Canadian, $1.00

world in which they were living. The democratic process in America, I was sure, could not be guaranteed unless our youth were introduced to the full story—the deficiencies as well as the achievements of our society, the problems and issues as well as the narrative of adventure.

But the narrative of adventure may be told with a certain degree of objectivity, while the classification of problems and issues, of deficiencies and achievements, is a matter of opinion. Dr. Rugg's interpretations, which color his books, seem sanely liberal and far from revolutionary. It is likely, as he asserts, that most of his detractors never read them.

As I pass from chapter to chapter of this meticulously detailed record of the author's vision on the road to Damascus, of his acceptance of his mission, and of the fashion in which he has carried the gospel, as well as a full outline of the gospel itself, I find myself a victim of shifting moods. At times I am impatient, as when Dr. Rugg finds it necessary to tell of the exact place and moment when the vision occurred, or would persuade me to look upon Teachers College as a sort of Early Church. There are moments of boredom when I find myself murmuring, "Thou sayest an undisputed thing in such a solemn way"; and there are many other moments when I wish that the author might have flavored his dish with a soupçon of humility and a sprinkling of humor. But after-thought assures me that few great crusaders have found time to cultivate either ingredient.

Surely, the conviction of many conservatives, seldom expressed but always felt, that "any change is dangerous" has done more harm to our schools than to any other institution. Dr. Rugg has fought for progress with great skill and a not unrewarded persistence. He has thrived on punishment and, one suspects, might welcome even martyrdom if he could be given a chance afterward to write about it.

BURGES JOHNSON

PUBLISHED THIS WEEK

THE INTENT OF THE ARTIST. By Sherwood Anderson, Thornton Wilder, Roger Sessions, and William Lescaze. Edited by Augusto Centeno. Princeton University Press. $2.50.

YOUR MEXICAN HOLIDAY. A Modern Guide. By Anita Brenner. Putnam. $3.

OF MEN AND WOMEN. By Pearl S. Buck. John Day. $2.

AGAINST THIS TORRENT. By Edward Mead Earle. Princeton University Press. $1.

FISCAL POLICY AND BUSINESS CYCLES. By Alvin H. Hansen. Norton. $3.75.

SATAN'S SERGEANTS. By Josephine Herbst. Scribner's. $2.50.

LOUISIANA HAYRIDE. By Harnett T. Kane. Morrow. $3.

THE INTERNMENT OF ALIENS. By F. Lafitte. Penguin. 25 cents.

A YANKEE DOCTOR IN PARADISE. By S. M. Lambert. Little, Brown. $3.

LIBERTY IN THE MODERN STATE. By Harold J. Laski. Penguin. 25 cents.

THE NINE DAYS WONDER. By John Masefield. Macmillan. $1.25.

FULL EMPLOYMENT. By John H. G. Pierson. Yale University Press. $2.50.

THE TIME IS NOW! By Pierre van Paassen. Dial. $1.

OUR WAR AND OUR PEACE. By James P. Warburg. Farrar and Rinehart. $1.75.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FILMS

Snow White and the 1,200 Dwarfs

Hollywood, April 30

TO VISIT the Walt Disney Studios for the first time is quite an experience. An ordinary studio for flesh-and-blood actors, once one is inside its impressive entrance, has a slightly lost and bewildered air, as if it had outgrown its strength and as if everything were happening a little too fast—the employees seem just a trifle depressed, the buildings untidy and temporary. Not so the Disney unit: the approach to the studios is down a quiet countrified stretch of road, hills and trees screen the buildings, and one is suddenly confronted with a vista which resembles something between a factory and a college campus. As I walked on to the lot the collegiate atmosphere became almost oppressive. It was the lunch hour, and nearly all the twelve hundred-odd employees had left their work and were strolling about; everyone seemed to know everyone else; they smiled and waved and shouted greetings.

The studio dining-room, which is at the far end of the lot, is the most luxurious I have seen in any studio. The décor is modern and very attractive, the food is excellent, the service expert, and one can survey through glass doors the studio store, where models of the more famous Disney characters coyly offer themselves for sale. Large plate-glass windows give on to a field where employees play ping-pong, croquet, basketball, baseball. A tour of the office and production buildings reveals them to be far better designed and equipped than those of any other studio. Of course the comparison is hardly fair—celluloid performers being less bulky and messy than flesh-and-blood performers—but this studio compares to any other as a model dairy to an old-fashioned cow shed. How incongruous it must seem to Walt, as the employees are privileged to call Mr. Disney, when he contemplates these delightful surroundings and savors the atmosphere of camaraderie, that that wicked old fairy Organized Labor should be making trouble among his merry little Dwarfs. He must find it very exasperating that the vexatious question of the low wages he pays is continually cropping up, and that some of his employees have a nasty way of demanding things.

The Disney business went along satisfactorily on a paternalistic basis for quite a time. Before the production of "Snow White," when Disney employed only about three hundred people, his particular method of dealing with labor was, from his point of view, highly successful. But with the rapid expansion of his plant, which coincides with the production of full-length feature pictures, he began to lose personal contact. During the production of "Snow White" the artists and other studio workers were informed that they were engaged on a great and daring experiment, that their cooperation in the form of hard work and overtime without pay was urgently required, and that they would be amply rewarded by bonuses if "Snow White" proved a financial success. After the picture had succeeded beyond the wildest dreams, a few employees were given ample bonuses, but the majority received barely enough to compensate them for the overtime they had put in. The same experiment was repeated with "Pinocchio"; this time no bonuses at all were paid, on the ground that the film did not make enough money, and the spirit of cooperation was pretty thoroughly damped.

Attempts at organizing the Disney employees were first made about three years ago under the auspices of the I. A. T. S. E. These were successfully scotched by the formation of a company guild, which in the course of time died of inertia, having achieved exactly nothing. Meanwhile the cartoon artists in other studios as well as Disney's had formed the Screen Cartoonists' Guild, an affiliate of the A. F. of L., and achieved startling results at every studio but Disney's. The minimum wage at Disney's is still about $17 a week, while at other studios, such as Schlesinger's, where the guild has been recognized, the minimum wage is about $23.

Some six months ago the Disney Studios imposed a wage cut, using the loss of European markets as an excuse, and Disney himself made a speech about everyone pulling together in a time of national emergency for the sake of the studio; this speech recruited more members for the Screen Cartoonists' Guild than a year of campaigning. When it became obvious that the guild would try to move into the studio, the company union miraculously revived, and Disney has been consistently refusing to deal with the S. C. G. on the ground that it is not representative of the majority of his employees. This argument is entirely specious, for the guild only claims to represent the actual artists—some five hundred of the twelve hundred employees—and of these it represents a very substantial majority.

Yesterday the argument between Disney and the S. C. G. reached a climax. At an NLRB hearing negotiations between them broke down completely, and the head of the regional labor board has forwarded to Washington a complaint against the Disney Studio charging it with domination of its company union. Disney has expressed his willingness to abide by the decision of the NLRB, and it seems likely that he will be forced to recognize the S. C. G. in the near future. This will just about spell the defeat of Disney's experiment in paternalism.

The local women's clubs are on the warpath. The Daughters of the American Revolution and the Women's Motion Picture Council (whatever that may be) are anxious to obtain a list of the film actors who signed a petition protesting against the deportation proceedings against Harry Bridges; club members intend to boycott theaters which show pictures featuring anyone who signed the petition.

RECENT FILMS

"Major Barbara," England's most important screen offering since the outbreak of war, will probably not appeal widely to the American public. As screen material the Shaw play is by no means as satisfactory as "Pygmalion": it is a little too argumentative, too subtle, too verbose. To present a fable such as this on the screen successfully, it is necessary to paint the blacks very black and the whites very white, a method that does not appeal at all to Mr. Shaw, who blends his arguments to provoke his audience. Then, too, it would seem that "Major Barbara" has dated just a little; religion is certainly no longer worth talking about as an opiate for the English or American people, and as a result Barbara herself emerges no longer as a symbol of defeated and muddled virtue, but as a harmless and charming crank, whose behavior would appear to an average movie audience as "plain nutty." Nevertheless, the production is beautifully contrived, and it is a pleasure to hear the brilliant dialogue delivered by the magnificent cast. Robert Morley's performance as Andrew Undershaft is nothing short of superb, while Wendy Hiller, Robert Newton, Rex Harrison, and the rest of the cast are nearly as good.

ANTHONY BOWER.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MUSIC

TO GO on with the subject of "Fantasia"—and Deems Taylor in particular—offering images as the proper effect of music (*The Nation* of January 11): In a review of "Men of Music" about a year ago I referred to Aldous Huxley's essay "Music at Night," in which he writes of what a painting, by "the forms and their arrangement . . . the disposition of the lines and planes and masses," will say "to anyone in the least sensitive to the eloquence of pure form." For a person with sensitiveness to the eloquence of form in sound a Mozart symphony has exciting meaning; for a person without this sensitiveness it has no meaning at all: neither the meaning of its formal eloquence, which he cannot perceive; nor the meaning he looks for—expressible in words, and concerned with actions and ideas—which the music does not convey. In this situation he may be led to misconceptions: if he fails to realize that any special sensitiveness is involved, if instead he lives on the democratic assumption of the adequacy of his normal equipment to any subject, any experience, if he thinks of the meaning as one that can be translated into verbal statements about ideas or actions, then he may feel that if there is really anything in the music to be understood he can understand it, and that all he needs is to have it explained to him in the right terms, or that there is something to know *about* the work, which, if he were told it, would give him the perception he lacks. And from these misconceptions he may be led to resentments and suspicions—resentment of the person who claims the understanding, the special equipment that makes understanding possible; suspicion that this person is withholding a meaning which he could reveal if he chose, or is pretending to understand a meaning that really isn't there to be understood.

In this situation the difficult thing to do is to correct the misconceptions and remove the resentments and suspicions: to get the person for whom the symphony means nothing to realize that understanding in this case involves a special sensitiveness to the "eloquence of pure form" which one person may have and another not, and which more persons have not than have; to get him to believe that those who claim to be excited by the music but cannot tell him what they are excited by are not all snobs or frauds; to get him to accept the notion that though in all other respects an adequately equipped human being he is without the specific equipment that would enable him to perceive and be excited by what these others perceive and are excited by. And all this is made even more difficult by the writers and speakers who do the easy and profitable thing, which is to defer to the misconceptions and nourish the resentments and suspicions. That is, they give their reader or listener the verbal interpretations and entertain him with the biographical details he asks for—which would in itself confirm his suspicion even if these commentators did not directly encourage him to suspect anyone who insists that music is not to be understood by means of verbal interpretations and biographical details, that its eloquence of pure form is to be understood only through the special sensitiveness for this eloquence.

This encouragement of the normally equipped person's resentment and distrust of the specially equipped person who understands music in a way the unequipped person does not—a form of cultural rabble-rousing—is something one encounters constantly; and it is a frequent practice of Deems Taylor. There is no jazzing of the classics, no gaudy orchestral metamorphosis of Bach, no "synthesis" of Mussorgsky, no tabloid version of a symphony movement—in short no vulgarity or indignity perpetrated on music—that is not accompanied by its defiant recommendation to the public to pay no attention to the "purists" who will disapprove of what real, healthy, normal music-lovers will enjoy. Such statements have been issued with "Fantasia"; and the prize must go as usual to Taylor who, in his introduction spoken from the screen in which he offers the pictures as the meaning of the music, points out that "these are not going to be the interpretations of trained musicians—which I think is all to the good." In other words, take what a Disney artist makes of music, and by implication anything that anyone makes, in preference to what a musician makes of it.

Note that in this instance it is a trained musician himself who makes such a statement—one of the trained musicians who are largely responsible for the things that are done to music in "Fantasia." For the fact is that Disney did not trust himself to work alone—that coming to the music of Bach and Beethoven and Schubert he seems to have felt that he could do only what would be sanctioned by people who understood Bach and Beethoven and Schubert in a way he did not, people whose sanction would be a guarantee of artistic rectitude—people like Stokowski and Taylor. It is, then, Stokowski and Taylor who are responsible for the conversion of Schubert's "Ave Maria" into a Hollywood Gothic apotheosis for Mussorgsky's "Night on Bald Mountain." True, it was Stravinsky himself who assented to what is done with his "Sacre du printemps"; but Stravinsky—a mere composer who does not earn by writing music the sums that a Stokowski and a Taylor get for doing the jobs they do—may be forgiven for picking up a little extra money in this way.

And one consequence of Disney's step may be noted in conclusion: Fifteen years ago the public on which Stokowski and Taylor practised their corruption of taste and understanding was a few thousand people in concert-halls, a few thousand readers of a newspaper; later, radio offered them a medium of communication with millions all over the country; and now Disney has given them still another medium with which to reach additional millions.

B. H. HAGGIN

OPEN MAY 10TH
ALL ABOARD for the SCAROON MANOR DECORATION DAY Special!
3 Full DAYS
ALL-EXPENSE WEEK-END
$27.50
Including ROUND-TRIP TRANSPORTATION
Private Chartered Train leaves Grand Central Thursday, May 29, 6 P.M. (D.S.T.). Three glorious, pleasure-packed days in the Heart of the Adirondacks.
Free Golf
Honeymoon Haven A FAIRYLAND IN JUNE
Your vacation starts the moment you board the train ...cocktails, dinner, music, entertainment enroute, arrive at Scaroon in time for a midnight supper and gala entertainment and dancing to 2 A.M
WITHOUT TRANSPORTATION $5.50 PER DAY
N. Y. Offices: 5 East 45th St. MU 2-4083 118 Fulton St. BA 7-1970 WO 2-8156
SCAROON MANOR HOTEL on SCHROON LAKE, N.Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Letters to the Editors

On Harold Rugg

Dear Sirs: Harold Rugg stands accused of subverting the minds of the young by breeding skepticism and mistrust of the institutions to which they have fallen heir. Let one of his students testify for him, one who studied with him for two and one-half years.

Until I heard Harold Rugg paint in sure, penetrating strokes the history of America, until I read widely and deeply as he guided me, my country as a nation had no voice. Through him I began to hear it sing and to feel the life that throbs beneath the everyday scene. He articulated his love for America in such wise as to personalize its history in a drama of men and women striving for better ways of living together. He demonstrated the dictum of Spinoza that the more we learn of men the less we seek to praise or blame them, and strive merely to understand them.

He taught me that we do not need to be afraid to teach the truth about America. Hammering out a civilization from a vast wilderness cannot be a pretty task. It is rough and raw and breeds lawlessness. Yet conquering this wilderness also took courage and fortitude and indomitable will. Harold Rugg draws the picture that the song creates when it measures out the story of "pilgrims whose stern, impassioned tread a thoroughfare for freedom beat across the wilderness." He affirms that we need not be afraid to see the bones there as well as the victories, to understand the role of the renegades as well as the vigilantes, to see the crudeness and ugliness of the false-fronted frontier towns as well as the little centers of culture that early began to rise. Even as we see the brutality and ruthlessness of exploitation, he marks, we need not lose sight of the spirit that fostered cooperation in all this welter of individualism and bred humor and a lovable expansiveness and generosity.

It is not by glossing over the "bad" in our history—which is not only immoral but conducive to a complacency for which there is no justification—that we make progress. It is by using all the resources at our command to understand the "bad" in the light of social and physical environment, to know why men did as they did on the lawless border and in the decades of exploitation. It is all America, good and bad. Some is to be regretted and to be ashamed of. Some is to be gloried in. Ours is a history more romantic than that of kings and princes. That is what Harold Rugg taught me: that this grand and thrilling story that is America's can awaken not only devotion and pride but courage to see her faults and name them, so that we may preserve what is rich and valid and change what is shameful and degrading.

To call Harold Rugg a materialist is to misunderstand a man who has explored the frontiers of American culture and more than any other educator has developed the potentialities for creative energy in our people. His father was a handicraftsman. As a boy he watched him carve with loving care cabinets, staircases, and doorways. Always that work was subjected to rigid scrutiny. No imperfection was tolerated. Only the best could go forth.

Harold Rugg noted this, and years later, pondering this creative act, he wondered about the qualities of the artist. Are they peculiar to the artist? Aren't they potential in all? Suppose, he imagined, we could create a nation of people characterized by integrity, a courage to be themselves in all they say and do, and with a cognizance of their obligation to society. Suppose, he thought further, we could develop a quality of thoroughness, that quality which makes the artist critical of his work. America is our work. To build this creative America requires understanding of her heterogeneous heritage, a knowledge which precludes the deadliness of a patriotism that will not criticize itself. Truly loving and knowing America, her people will demand that she realize her potentialities. Demanding this, her people will give only of their best, and be satisfied only with the best.

Harold Rugg's teaching is all positive. Hate is eliminated, and a passionate desire to preserve and improve the processes of a dynamic democracy is conveyed. My greatest hope as a teacher would be that I could give to my pupils the love and understanding of America that Harold Rugg has given to me.

RUTH MEYER

New York, April 17

County Reorganization

Dear Sirs: In the article Can Tammany Come Back? in *The Nation* of April 19 you warn New York City voters that the Democratic political machine is still with us and scarcely weakened by Mayor LaGuardia's triumph in the last two elections. It is all too true that Tammany still has great power in the City Council and in the cumbersome and wholly unnecessary county governments which we are still supporting. To be sure we voted county reform as long ago as 1935; that is, the voters authorized the Board of Aldermen to abolish the many useless and expensive separate county offices of sheriff and register. But the Board of Aldermen, and later the City Council as formed under the new city charter in 1936, has disregarded the wishes of the people.

The sheriff's salary is $15,000 annually in New York, Bronx, and King's County, $8,000 in Queens County, and $6,000 in Richmond. Combined, these amounts would pay the salaries of the Commissioners of Health, Hospitals, Police, and Welfare, and still leave more than $1,000 over. The register's salary is $12,000 in each county except Queens, where it is $8,000. The combined salaries amount to $500 more than the combined salaries of the Commissioners of the Departments of Fire, Correction, Purchase, Housing, and Building.

In the sheriffs' offices there are only 14 civil-service jobs at the present time, but there are 364 political jobs which are costing the taxpayers of the city thousands of dollars every year. In the registers' offices 59 political jobs are exempt from civil-service regulations. Public investigations—by Herlands and Blanchard—have shown that most of these jobs are created to take care of political henchmen at public expense.

Since Tammany still has such a strangle-hold on the City Council, the only way for the taxpayers of New York City to rid themselves of this politically corrupt and expensive system is by initiative and referendum. A petition is now being circulated by the Non-Partisan Committee and supported by the League of Women Voters. We need 50,000 signatures of qualified voters to bring this vital issue of county reorganization be-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fore the voters of New York City on next Election Day.

Briefly, county reorganization is a plan (1) to abolish the high-paid, useless, and overlapping offices of county sheriff and register; (2) to establish one city-wide office of sheriff and register; (3) to make these offices and every job in them open only to civil-service workers. This plan deserves the support of every citizen who wants democracy to succeed. It is a plan to make ability and not politics the test for our civil employees. If successful, county reorganization will remove a source of corruption in our city government and at the same time save the city up to a half-million dollars annually.

We need the help of every interested voter in Greater New York to put over this campaign for better government. The most immediate way to help is to circulate a petition and get signatures. Petitions, directions, and further information about county reorganization can be obtained at the New York City League of Women Voters, 151 East Fiftieth Street. Eldorado 5-6860.

LETTY GAY CARSON,
County Reorganization Chairman
New York League of Women Voters
New York, April 30

Agrees with Sandburg

Dear Sirs: It was an immense pleasure to hear from Carl Sandburg through your pages (issue of April 26), especially since your propaganda *for* entering the war had made many of your readers wonder whether you were really going to remain a "liberal" publication.

It is perfectly true that the American people are not anxious to enter another European war to save England's fox-hunting set. Moreover, the much-vaunted plans for a "new order" of the Stracheys and the Bevins and the Anglican church seem like very feeble gasps when the British government does not take the least step in that direction.

This, to my mind, relieves us of any obligation to fight a second futile war for democracy, even at Vice-President Wallace's suggestion.

C. DEWITT ELDRIDGE

Chapel Hill, N. C., May 2

CORRECTION: In I. F. Stone's Washington letter of last week a sentence read: "In the first quarter of this year *defense sales were almost $50,000,000* —out of total sales of $65,000,000." The figure $65,000,000 should have read $650,000,000.

CONTRIBUTORS

FRITZ STERNBERG, an authority on the economics of war, is the author of "Fivefold Aid to Britain."

LOUIS DOLIVET, French authority on international law, served as general secretary of various organizations working for collective security before the war.

CHARLES CURTIS MUNZ, author of "Land Without Moses," has written extensively on the economic and political problems of the Southwest.

R. P. BLACKMUR, critic and poet, is the author of "The Double Agent" and "The Expense of Greatness."

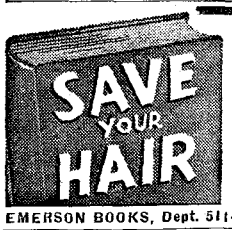
LEWIS GANNETT, conductor of the New York *Herald Tribune's* daily book column, was an editor of *The Nation* for nine years.

LINDSAY ROGERS is Burgess professor of public law at Columbia University.

JACQUES BARZUN, assistant professor of history at Columbia, is the author of "Darwin, Marx, Wagner."

BURGES JOHNSON is professor of English at Union College.

BOOK



"IF you really want to save your hair, this book tells you exactly how to go about it. Contains a wealth of strictly reliable scientific information about the care of the hair, including what to do about dandruff." Illustrated. By OSCAR L. LEVIN, M.D. Formerly $2—NOW 98c Money back if not satisfied.

EMERSON BOOKS, Dept. 511-B, 251 W. 19 St., N. Y. C.

WANTED

"ANGELS" WANTED

to help finish 25 years of work, developing evolutionary psychology as a new approach to social problems. I need a volunteer secretary, a bibliographer, money for printing and distributing among reference libraries one to ten books, whose outlook is too new and devastating for commercial publishers. Let me send a descriptive pamphlet to you.

THEODORE SCHROEDER COSCOB, CONN.

HANDWRITING ANALYSIS

Accurate, scientific delineation of character, personality traits, aptitudes from handwriting by psychologist. $3. With vocational advice, $5. Questions answered. Dr Reiss, 4410 B'way, N. Y. C.

SITUATIONS WANTED

Young woman, intelligent, secretary, stenographer, bookkeeper; also experience social service, psychiatric and medical dictation. Box 1319, c/o The Nation.

Young lady desires summer situation tutor-companion in American home. Excellent French background. Small remuneration. References. Box 1321, c/o The Nation.

MISCELLANEOUS

Put your thoughts in print! $2.00 full page. Any subject! Circulation nil. Request sample magazine. Box 1320, c/o The Nation.

SUMMER RENTALS

An Inexpensive Vacation for the Entire Family!

Newly furnished Bungalows on sturdy structures, beautifully landscaped. Kitchenette facilities. Lake on premises, Tennis, Handball, Rowing, Canoeing, Fishing, Bathing, Horseback Riding, etc. Write or phone for Booklet.

Somerset Bungalow Colony
★ FORMERLY CAMP CARLISLE ★
SYLVAN LAKE • HOPEWELL JUNCTION, N.Y.
N.Y. OFFICE • 261 BROADWAY • REctor 2-4319

BUNGALOW COLONY
Camp Life for Entire Family

Housekeeping, furnished, modern conveniences, including frigidaires. Counsellors for children. Arts and Crafts. All athletic activities. Private lake, etc. New York City, 86 miles. Philadelphia, 35 miles. Price very reasonable. Write for particulars.

V. J. Sharpe, 402 75th St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

Brookridge Cottages. Delightful, modern; fireplaces, all improvements; tennis, bathing, badminton, secluded country, commuting distance. Peekskill 3515 M 2.

Westport, Conn. 20 minutes from beach. Colonial farm house, 7 rooms, 2 baths. $600, long season. Phone Dr. Leslie, ME 3-2380.

Bungalows, all conveniences, athletic facilities, $250-400 season. Tel. Peekskill 2957W or UN 3-4150. Also acreage for sale.

Completely modernized furnished four-room colonial bungalow. Raftered living room, 18x25, fireplace. Swimming 200 ft. away. Children's day camp available. 30 miles from city. Free Acres, N. J. VIrginia 3-7267.

SUMMER RENTALS

Charming 3½ room hilltop rustic cottage, modern appointments; on 4 beautifully landscaped acres. Swimming, tennis, golf. Candlewood Lake district, Conn. Phone MU 5-3300, Apt. 6C, after 6:30 P. M.

FOR RENT OR SALE

Improved Adirondack farm; fully furnished, secluded; tennis court, swimming; suitable camp nucleus. Clara R. Sisto, 840 Grand Concourse, N. Y. C.

25 beautiful landscaped acres in Westchester County, 4 frame houses and stone garage, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, tennis court, bowling alley. School or institution. Box 1322, c/o The Nation.

APARTMENT TO SUBLET

Attractively furnished sunny 2½ rooms, for July-September; near W. 96 St. express. Call mornings or evenings, AC 2-2264.

WEARING APPAREL

Miss Goodman's Model Clothes (Dresses, Coats, Costumes). Wear the unmistakable stamp of quality and styling. You buy value not labels. Hand-made Hats from $5.00. 474 7th Ave. (36th St.). LA 4-4013.

INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS

THE NATION, 55 Fifth Ave., New York. Price 15 cents a copy. By subscription—Domestic: One year $5; Two years $8; Three years $11. Additional Postage per year: Foreign, $1; Canadian, $1. The Nation is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Index to Labor Articles, Public Affairs Information Service, Dramatic Index. Two weeks' notice and the old address as well as the new are required for change of address.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED